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JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia

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16 JUNE 1987

NEAR EAST & SOUTH ASIA

CONTENTS

NEAR EAST

EGYPT

AL-AHRAM on Palestinian 'Contradictions' (MENA, 7 May 87)	1
AL-AHRAM Columnist Defends Egyptian Stand on PLO (Ibrahim Nafi'; AL-AHRAM, 8 May 87)	3
Sa'dah Criticizes PLO Defenders (Ibrahim Sa'dah; AKHBAR AL-YAWM, 16 May 87)	8
AL-WAFD Deplores 'Unjust' PLO Stance on Egypt (Mustafa Shardi; AL-WAFD, 1 May 87)	13
Cairo Urges PLO To Adopt Stand on Mideast Conference ('Atif al-Ghamri; Cairo Domestic Service, 16 May 87)	15
Egypt's Al-Baz on PLO Ties, Other Issues (Patrick Seale; AL-QABAS, 11 May 87)	17
Egypt's Ghali on Peace Process (Butrus Ghali Interview; AL HAMISHMAR, 24 Apr 87)	20
AL-AHRAM Lauds King Husayn Peace Efforts (Editorial; AL-AHRAM, 15 May 87)	25
Commentary Ponders Chances for Peace Conference (Ahmad Sha'ban; Cairo Domestic Service, 12 May 87)	27

Sidqi Discusses Debts, Paris Club Agreement (MENA, 23 May 87)	28
'Abd-al-Majid on International Conference, Gulf (Cairo Domestic Service, 20 May 87)	29
'Abd-al-Majid on Nonaligned, Mediterranean Issues (MENA, 19 May 87)	30
AL-AHRAM on Shamir-Peres Conference Debate (Editorial; AL-AHRAM, 18 May 87)	32
'Abd-al-Majid AL-AHRAM Interview (Anji Rushdi; AL-AHRAM, 18 Apr 87)	33
Egypt's Zaki Badr on Elections, Security (Zaki Badr Interview; AL-MUSAWWAR, 24 Apr 87)	40
Asyut Security Chief on Situation, Drugs (Hasan 'Ali Sulayman Interview; AL-ANBA', 8 May 87)	43
NPUG Leader Views Recent Elections (Khalid Muhyi-al-Din Interview; AL-AHALI, 15 Apr 87)	46
Egypt's 'Atif Sidqi Meets With Press (Ahmad Shakir; AL-DUSTUR, 8 May 87)	49
Egypt's Abu-Ghazalah on Military Affairs (Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Abu-Ghazalah Interview; AL- MUSAWWAR, 8 May 87)	52
Economy Minister Holds News Conference (MENA, 11 May 87)	58
Economy Minister on Exchange Rate Policy (Yusri Mustafa; Cairo Domestic Service, 11 May 87)	60
MENA Notes Importance of New Exchange Policies (MENA, 11 May 87)	63
Cabinet Discusses 1987-88 Budget Objectives (Cairo Domestic Service, 17 May 87)	64
Security in Egypt Requires Restraint by Authorities (Mustafa Shardi; AL-WAFD, 8 May 87)	65
Consultative Council Chairman Interviewed ('Ali Lutfi Interview; AL-HAWADITH, 8 May 87)	67
'Arafat Idea for Palestinian-Israeli State Attacked (MENA, 9 May 87)	71

Report on Tanta Prison Riots ('Abd-al-'Aziz Hilali, Majdi 'Abd al-Ghani; AL-AKHBAR, 20 May 87)	72
Mubarak Chairs Meeting on Domestic, Foreign Issues (Cairo Domestic Service, 23 May 87)	73
Ex-Interior Minister Abu-Basha Interviewed (Mustafa Shardi; AL-WAFD, 12 May 87)	74
AL-JUMHURIYAH Columnist Says Israeli Tourists 'Spies (Muhammad al-Hayawan; AL-JUMHURIYAH, 23 Apr 87)	76
Monte Carlo on Reaction (Huda Tawfiq; Paris Radio Monte Carlo, 25 Apr 87)	78
Briefs	
Foreign Currency Dealers Arrested -	80
Mubarak on Peace Conference	80
Oil Reserve Increase	80
New Offshore Oil Find	81
Oil Production, Value	81
Protocol With Madagascar	81
Japanese Grants	81
Party Deputy Leader Dies	81
New Yugoslav President	82
Memo Received, Reply Planned	82
Loan Agreement Signed	82
Al-Shadhili Denied Passport	82
Energy Cooperation Protocol Signed	82
Official Departs for USSR	83
Minister Visits Britain, France	83
France Supports IMF Negotiations	83
SUDAN	
SAC Leader, Former Labor Minister Interviewed (GUIDING STAR, 14 May 87)	84
Egyptian Troops Reported in Halaib Region (SUDAN TIMES, 12 May 87)	88
SOUTH ASIA	
AFGHANISTAN	
Briefs	
Education Protocol With USSR	89
Arms Cache Seized	89

INDIA

Press Reports on Building Tensions on PRC Border (Various sources, various dates)	90
PRC, Indian 'Mobilization', by Ravi Rikhye	90
Disagreement Over Arunachal Pradesh	91
Discussion in Lok Sabha, by Chidanand Rajghatta	92
Alleged Border Crossings	93
Tripathi Reports Gandhi, Singh Relations Improved (THE STATESMAN, 23 Apr 87)	94
Report on Meeting of Bharatiya Janata Executive (THE HINDU, 20 Apr 87)	96
Report on Gandhi 15 Apr Speech to Congress-I (THE HINDU, 16 Apr 87)	97
Congress-I Alleges Conspiracy to Weaken India (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 19 Apr 87; THE HINDU, 19 Apr 87) ...	98
Summary of Resolution	98
Excerpts of Resolution	100
Correspondent on Struggle Against Orissa Test Range (THE SUNDAY STATESMAN, 19 Apr 87)	102
Stay of Execution for Gandhi Killers Granted (THE TIMES OF INDIA, 15 Apr 87)	105
IRAN	
Tehran Sums Up Iraqi Kurdish Operations (Tehran Domestic Service, 4 May 87)	107
Commentary Criticizes Policy of 'Indifference' (Tehran Domestic Service, 26 Apr 87)	109
Commerce Official Outlines Export, Import Figures (IRNA, 30 Apr 87)	111
Rafsanjani Addresses Workers on Labor Day (Tehran Domestic Service, 30 Apr 87)	112
Armenians Rally To Commemorate 1915 Massacre (IRNA, 24 Apr 87)	113
Muslims in Kuwaiti Jail 'Brutally Tortured' (IRNA, 4 May 87)	114

AL-AHRAM ON PALESTINIAN 'CONTRADICTIONS'

NC080604 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2320 GMT 7 May 87

[Text] Cairo, 7 May (MENA)--In his weekly article, Ibrahim Nafi', chief editor of the AL-AHRAM newspaper, has explained that the closure of PLO offices in Egypt was an expression of anger and resentment rather than a punishment of the parties which harmed Egypt. Nafi' stated that Egypt would not have been satisfied with the decision to close these offices if it had wanted to apply the principle of punishment in this case. He said: If Egypt wanted to widen the breach, its reaction to the recent PNC resolutions would have been many times stronger.

In his article in Friday's edition, Nafi' adds: It is quite clear that Egypt's nationalist leaders are angered by what was inflicted on Egypt at the PNC meetings. But despite all that, Egypt has no desire to broaden the rift.

Nafi', who is also the doyen of Egyptian journalists, considers that despite his feelings of bitterness, President Mubarak might seek to excuse Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat's surrender to pressure from Libya, Syria, and Algeria to make him sever his relations with Egypt. The writer says: However, President Mubarak does not absolve 'Arafat from his responsibility for what happened in the PNC meetings. 'Arafat is the leader and he should have taken responsibility for directing the deliberations in the interests of his people. Nafi' asserts that these interests can only be served through Egypt and its efforts.

Ibrahim Nafi' notes that some Arab parties are laboring under the illusion that there is a national problem in Egypt. He declares that Egypt's only national issue today is that of development, construction, and the alleviation of the Egyptian people's sufferings. He also points out that differences among parties in Egypt are inherent in any political regime based on a multi-party system.

The writer mockingly wonders how a decision by some Arab parties to confine relations with Egypt to its nationalist forces can be implemented. He says that the implementation of any decision of this kind entails dealing with Egypt's national leaders and government, as well as with all parties, without exception.

Nafi' then refers to Algeria's position during the PNC meetings, saying that this position still poses a big question which is difficult to answer. He expresses his astonishment and asks: What happened? Why did the Algerian brothers switch course so suddenly? In whose interest was it, and why?

In his article, Nafi' discloses that Faruq Qaddumi, chief of the PLO Political Department, has submitted a report to Belgium, the current chairman of the EEC, stating that the PLO agrees to the concept of autonomy in the [West] Bank and Gaza Strip. This is after the Palestinian leaders have rejected this concept for years, and comes at a time when some PLO factions are attacking Egypt on the pretext that Egypt advocates the concept of autonomy.

Nafi' declares himself astounded, and wonders what the aim of the PLC could be. He asks: What does the PLO want at a time when everyone is talking about an international conference and working to bring it about? He asserts that this reveals new contradictions and riddles in Palestinian policies.

Nafi' concludes by affirming that the Arab nation no longer accepts this deception. This nation well knows that Egypt's devotion to the Arab cause is greater than that of some Arab countries that did not sign the Camp David accords and are competing to denounce these accords and Egypt too, in order to achieve their regional goals.

/12858

CSO: 4500/97

AL-AHRAM COLUMNIST DEFENDS EGYPTIAN STAND ON PLO

JN110852 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 8 May 87 pp 1, 3

['Calmly' column by Editor in Chief Ibrahim Nafi']

[Text] There are still some blatant mistakes governing the view of some Arab factions and parties toward Egypt, and their dealings with it.

Among the mistakes of some Arab parties is that they are immersed in the illusion that there is a national issue in Egypt on which people have different views and that those who believe in it become nationalists and those who do not become nonnationalists.

Because Egypt freed itself from the British occupation--and thereby resolved its national problem--and then removed the disgrace of the Israeli occupation of part of its territory, nobody can say that Egypt now has a national issue. Nevertheless, Egypt does have an issue which tops its political priorities. Egypt is exerting its utmost to reach a just solution to this issue, although it has been stabbed in the back by those who are very involved in this issue, which for them rises to the level of a national issue.

Apart from that, what is Egypt's current national issue except for the issue of development, reconstruction, and alleviating the suffering of the Egyptian people? This issue is the business of the Egyptian people only, and is being taken care of by this people and their national government and national ruling and opposition parties alike.

On what basis then do some Arab parties try to claim that they will deal only with the nationalist forces in Egypt? And what are these forces? Who has the right to decide whether some political forces in Egypt are nationalist or nonnationalist?

We do not want to reopen old wounds, but we say that looking for nonnationalist forces or forces working for foreign interests is useless in Egypt. However, it could be useful in other places or with other movements which do not represent their people, move at orders not issued by their huses, and want to achieve objectives which are completely separate from the objectives of their people who suffer alone and cry for

help while their leaderships are busy dividing Egypt into nationalist and nonnationalist forces.

We do not want to reopen old wounds or to sprinkle them with salt as others are doing. We are content to tell those adopting this view in dealing with Egypt that this exposes their ignorance of the Egyptian people, the political situation in Egypt, and the true state of affairs in it.

The small number of those who make a living out of accepting invitations and in analyses and theorization and with whom you chat behind closed doors do not represent the Egyptian people or their basic forces. The partisan differences in Egypt are necessary differences in any multiparty political system based on pluralism. These differences, though, revolve within the framework of the Egyptian people's general interests and are not brought from abroad.

We may disagree in our country, but it is a disagreement of partners in responsibility toward the homeland, not a disagreement of rivals manipulated by foreign forces. We are all Egyptians interested in the future of our country and the good of its people before anything else.

Who are you going to deal with in Egypt? The implementation of your "historic" resolution confining dealing with Egypt to the nationalist forces in it necessitates dealing with the national Egyptian leadership and its national government and all its parties without exception. Yes, how are [you] going to implement this "historic" resolution.

The Egyptian people have endured their circumstances for a long time. They have also endured the wrong dealings of some Arab parties with them for many years. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Egyptian people have, at times, lost confidence in the sincerity of Arab intentions toward them and that President Mubarak has exerted during the past 5 years huge efforts to restore the Egyptian people's trust in Arab credibility, to remedy the maladies of the Arab nation's relations with Egypt and its people, and to remove a great deal of bitterness from the souls of the patient Egyptian people who, deep down, felt that the Arab nation deserted them in times of hardship and forgot them during their petroleum and financial boom, forgetful of the Egyptian people, their sacrifices and even their great deeds during the time the Arab nation needed support.

This leads us onto another serious mistake made by most of the Arab sides, particularly the Palestinian side in dealing with Egypt. They deal with Egypt as if it is the vulnerable party which can be harmed--if there is a narrow tactical interest--and which can then be easily appeased. They believe it is acceptable to achieve small gains at the expense of Egypt because in the end it will not kill the Palestinians, it will not expel them, nor will it dispatch assassination teams to punish those who harm it as other parties do.

Therefore, they do not hesitate to encroach on Egypt to come closer to Syria or Libya. Neither do they hesitate to return to Egypt because it always forgives and accepts excuses. So long as Egypt does not pay so that they will be nice to it, and so long as it does not kill so that they will fear it, it will always be the party they sacrifice in any political bargain for short-term objectives or to achieve a balance at certain stages or to please those who kill them, besiege their people, and deprive them of food and water until some even allow them to eat human and animal corpses. This is the bitterness the Egyptian feels deep inside them toward this method of dealing with Egypt and toward the recent PNC resolutions.

Although I am still a supporter of the call for not expanding the cycle of rupture and for not remembering old wounds, however, I strongly support the corrective step taken recently by Egypt because it is a fair implementation of the principle of reciprocity which is actually applied in our foreign policy toward all world countries, except the brothers with whom we are patient--the brothers who hurt our feelings and insulted our people.

Closing the PLO offices in Egypt is an expression of anger and resentment. It is not a punishment of the parties which encroached on Egypt. If Egypt wanted to apply the principle of punishment it would not be satisfied with closing the offices. If Egypt wanted to expand the differences, its reaction to the PNC resolutions would be more violent. It is obvious that the national leadership in Egypt is angry because of what Egypt was exposed to in the PNC. However, Egypt does not want to expand the rupture or build on it.

I can say that despite the pain and bitterness President Mubarak excused Yasir 'Arafat for his capitulation to pressures from Libya, Syria, and regrettably from Algeria. But Mubarak does not absolve 'Arafat from responsibility because he is the leader and because he should have shouldered his responsibility in directing matters in the interest of his people. The interests of the Palestinian people can only be achieved through Egypt, with Egypt, and through its efforts.

Algeria's stand during the PNC meetings still constitutes a big question mark. What happened? Why did the Algerian brothers suddenly change their masks? In whose interest and what are the motives for doing this? The Egyptian, as well as the Arab people, cannot understand this. These questions are added to the Arab political riddles and to its strange contradictions. We will answer the important questions of this issue in the near future, God willing.

We do not object to the unity of the Palestinian factions. In fact, we were the first to call for, the most to work for, and the sincerest advocates of this unity. This is because we do not fabricate agent organizations and do not unleash factions against other factions as those, whose pressure to part with Egypt has been met, are doing.

We also support the independent Palestinian decisionmaking. We were the first to call for it provided it is truly Palestinian and truly independent and not that sort of decisionmaking whose only show of independence is hostility toward Egypt. They know perfectly well that those to whose pressures they submitted are the arch enemies of independent Palestinian decisionmaking.

We also support the need to reach a Palestinian formula for a solution agreed upon by all factions, provided that this formula is truly Palestinian and is not at the expense of Egypt and the dignity of its leadership and people.

Everyone knows that there is no solution without Egypt. Everyone knows that the Egyptian people have suffered a great deal through history and did not lose its faith in Arab rights, Arab causes, and Arab affiliation.

Nobody can dictate on Egypt a policy or terms which harm the interests of its people. Nobody has the right to choose a course for Egypt, especially if his feeble justification for this is Camp David which no longer exists and whose Palestinian paper was rejected by Egypt, completely frozen, and became a document in the archives of international politics because Egypt rejected it and because Egypt did not accept to impose on the Palestinian people something they do not accept.

If the pretext then is normalization as they say, let those who are loyal to the cause of their country tell us where this normalization is and what influence it has on Arab Egypt's policy and loyalty to the Arabs' cause.

Even worse; what is the meaning of the reports which say that Faruq Qaddumi, chief of the PLO Political Department, has informed Belgium, the current chairman of the EC, that the PLO accepts the concept of autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza at a time when the organization has for years been rejecting this idea and some PLO factions have been attacking Egypt claiming that it supports it?

What is the aim of resubmitting this idea by the organization while everybody is talking about an international conference and working to convene it? This is a new contradiction and a puzzle in the Palestinian policy.

When there was talk about autonomy they [the Palestinians] rejected it and called for an international conference to solve the whole issue and when there is talk about an international conference they call for autonomy and impede efforts to convene an international conference. What exactly do they want, so that we can support their demands and convince the world of them?

The Arab nation no longer accepts this deception. The Arab people know well that Egypt is more sincere to the Arab issue than Arab countries which did not sign the Camp David agreement and attack it and Egypt to achieve their regional objectives.

The Arab people also know that Egypt is more sincere to the Arab issue than some factions which exploit the Palestinian question and gain a living through attacking Camp David.

The Arab people and everybody know that. It is yet to be known by some parties which use Egypt as a ground to achieve alleged victories and false heroic deeds at the expense of Egypt because they are still ridden with this wrong, blatant view of Egypt.

/12858

CSO: 4500/97

SA'DAH CRITICIZES PLO DEFENDERS

JN172002 Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 16 May 87 pp 1, 8

[Ibrahim Sa'dah's "Political Column": "An Inevitable Return"]

[Text] We did not wrong the Palestinian leaders when we criticized their contradictory behavior, rejected their hostile political maneuvers, and exposed the dimensions of the vicious circle which they are eager to revolve within. Moreover, we did not wrong the leaders of the Palestinian organizations, regardless of their affiliations and different aims, when we spoke about them in a manner which we should not have following the hostile resolution adopted by their recent PNC session in Algiers which acclaimed the boycott of Egypt and tried to drive a wedge between its people and government.

On the basis of my conviction of the extent of the ingratitude Egypt, people and successive governments, received I expressed my opinion clearly and objectively on the Palestinians in AKHBAR AL-YAWM a few weeks ago. I would not have returned to this topic had not some Egyptian writers rushed to defend the Palestinian stand, the Palestinian leaders, the Palestine question, the Palestinian decision, and the steadfastness and confrontation front which supports all this.

Those writers have the right to say what they said and to defend what they wish. In Egypt, the only Arab country which allows freedom of press and expression, I can say something which can be rejected by someone else and someone else can say something which I may reject. We leave it up to Egyptian public opinion to accept or reject either of the two views.

The writers who opposed the Egyptian reaction, both governmental and popular, to the recent PNC session's encroachment and impertinence, based their argument on the illusion the PNC session did not encroach on the Egyptian people and leadership in the strict sense of the word. They affirmed the leaders of the Palestinian organizations were very eager to maintain relations with Egypt, the biggest Arab country which cannot be sacrificed and whose honorable role in adopting the Palestine question and in defending it with the last drop of blood of its soldiers and officers cannot be disavowed. I wish those writers had only been satisfied with this illusion but they added to this a very serious accusation which I did not think was possible to make so easily.

They very simply said the information that reached President Husni Mubarak on the PNC was incorrect and that the PNC resolution on Egypt did not mention a single word which could be interpreted as the Egyptian leadership had interpreted it. On the contrary, they claimed that the heroes of the Palestine question praised Egypt and acclaimed its leadership and affirmed adherence to their relations with the Egyptian regime. They also insisted that the information received by President Husni Mubarak was incorrect and a mere fabrication by U.S. imperialism, Zionism, and the supporters of the rejected Camp David school. I do not believe anyone will be convinced by these lies. It is unreasonable for anyone connected with the Egyptian president to dare convey to him incorrect information or a resolution which was not adopted.

Moreover, I do not believe those who made this serious accusation really believe what they said when they accused those connected with the president of peddling the ideas and policies of U.S. and Israeli imperialism. If they really said this then their sole aim is to hang onto a straw in the hope it may save their views from the abyss into which they have fallen, deceive those who cannot be deceived, or cast doubt on things beyond any suspicion.

Those writers were unlucky because those whom they defended have turned them away. In fact, they did not hesitate to expose them and their lies and to show them as hypocrites. The Palestinian leadership, represented by Yasir 'Arafat, was concerned about confirming its delusion and self-deception through its statements flattering Egypt and through its announcements showing gratitude to the Egyptian people and stressing commitment to relations with Husni Mubarak's national leadership, to a point where Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has said that he is Egyptian in identity. However, these statements and announcements have been dissipated and torpedoed by other statements and announcements made by another Palestinian leader who is no less important than Yasir 'Arafat, if not more important than him.

PFLP leader George Habash has spent the past several years under the umbrella and protection of the Alawite Ba'thist Syrian regime. He who lives under the protection of this regime becomes helpless because the decision is made by the Syrian regime, which protects and feeds him and allows him to live like a millionaire. He has nothing to do with the stand he adopts because it is tailored to him. In other words, he becomes a puppet manipulated by the Alawite Ba'thist regime.

To satisfy George Habash, 'Arafat made concessions to him and yielded to his masters' conditions, stands, and the orders of those who give him shelter, feed him, and fill his pockets. The PLO leader, the official and the only spokesman for the Palestinian people, no longer has confidence in his popularity, can no longer trust his loyalists, and can no longer curb the defiance of his rivals. The cause has become no longer his cause only and the rational policy which he adopted before is no longer supported by those who compete with him. When Abu-'Ammar realized his post as a PLO leader would be affected and undermined, he did not hesitate to go back on his commitments, on the policy which he was enthusiastic about, and on his alliances. The cause

is no longer important and the liberation of Palestinian territory can now be postponed to the 25th century. However, what is more important and cannot be sacrificed is the post of the PLO leader, its privileges, and the halo which glows around his head.

This is what Abu 'Ammar did. Contacts with Egypt which saved him from death would be useless as long as they threaten his throne. Moreover, attacking the Egyptian leadership, which supported him and announced its adherence to his leadership, would be alright as long as it prolongs his sitting on his chair. His alliance with those who sought to depose and assassinate him is alright as long as his major objective is to continue to be the Palestinian people's leader, a spokesman for them, traveling on board a private plane to world capitals, advocating the cause, and crying about the bad conditions of millions of Palestinians in the occupied territory and in the refugee camps in Lebanon and elsewhere, hoping to double the bank balance of his organization and to continue to enjoy political and financial glories without control or supervision.

For the sake of all these gains Abu-'Ammar agreed to reconciliation with his strongest rival, the primary opponent of his leadership, and the strongest leader who seeks to liquidate him. This opportunist policy has succeeded in restoring Palestinian unity and in giving life to alliance among all Palestinian organizations, which lie in wait for each other, under the umbrella of the Palestinian conference held recently in Algiers.

How naive 'Arafat is! He imagined he could readily keep all of his lines of communication open by uttering statements belied by facts on the ground, and giving assurances banking on the credulousness of allies, while at the same time entering into an alliance with those who called for his murder and who sought to oust him from the paradise where he has been enjoying himself for so many years.

His ally Egypt--the people before the leadership--no longer gives credence to any word he utters! Egypt has given him many opportunities to return to his senses, and all possible support to prove himself as leader and spokesman of the Palestinian people and defender of their cause. But, most unfortunately, to those who still give the benefit of the doubt to his stands and statements, he has proven that he is not so much the champion of a cause as an identity, and that he does not see, the recovery of his people's land as much as his standing. This was confirmed by the PNC resolutions when Abu-'Ammar, who has stressed his Egyptian identity often enough endorsed the severance of relations with Egypt and an attempt to drive a wedge between Egypt and its people in accordance with the orders of his rivals, whose actions and statements are dictated by the Hafiz al-Asad regime in Damascus!

If certain Egyptian writers have embraced the stands of Yasir 'Arafat, repeated his lies, and forsaken Egypt to which they belong for personal gains, George Habash--the puppet of the Syrian regime--did not hesitate to let down the Egypt writers who support Palestinian trickery and thus projected them in Egypt in unenviable image through his recent press statements, which 'Arafat has yet to comment on.

In the 12 May issue of the Kuwaiti daily AL-QABAS George Habash, the only competitor for 'Arafat's comfortable chair, was asked by the 'Adil Ilyas, the paper's correspondent, about the significance of the recent PNC resolution. The PFLP leader gave a clear answer: "The PNC decided on a number of political resolutions, the most important of which was the one concerning relations between the PLO and the Egyptian regime. I think you have this in mind." The AL-QABAS correspondent replied by saying: "Exactly." George Habash answered: "The PNC decided on numerous resolutions which, overall, put the PLO on a patriotic platform and steered it on a clear, anti-imperialist, anti-zionist course."

The AL-QABAS correspondent was not satisfied with the answer so he sought further clarification by asking: "Before we discuss the other resolutions, let's ponder the more important decision to freeze or sever the PLO's ties with the Egyptian regime. Do you think the PLO leader will abide by it?"

George Habash replied: "Naturally all must abide by every decision we make be it the PLO leader or the other Palestinian factions that approved the resolutions. We should not lose sight of the bitter experience we have gone through over the past 4 years resulting from an unscrupulous compliance with PNC resolutions."

Not satisfied with this reply, the Kuwaiti paper's correspondent repeated his question to George Habash: Are you personally reassured that the chairman of the PLO will respect and abide by the resolution to sever relations with Egypt? George Habash replied: We will struggle on the basis that all abide by the resolutions that are adopted by the highest legislative body, the PNC.

This was the text of the statements made by the PFLP leader who did not desist from his animosity toward Yasir 'Arafat and in which he affirmed that the recent PNC session passed a resolution to freeze and sever relations with the Egyptian regime. This was the only thing that drew my attention in the lengthy interview George Habash granted to AL-QABAS which was published in its 12 May issue. It is a fact that he was skeptical about the usefulness of convening an international conference by affirming that armed struggle against Israel is the only solution to the Palestinian cause. The only meaning of this skepticism is that Habash best reflects the viewpoint of the Syrian regime which wants to perpetuate the present state of affairs because it believes this will be the guarantee that will keep the "Alawite regime in Syria in power. We have not been surprised by such a viewpoint which is usually expressed by those who have no solution for the Palestinian cause and who are interested in this cause only to the extent of what it will achieve for them in terms of continuity, one upmanships, and false chivalry.

The only thing that drew my attention in George Habash's interview was his affirmation that the recent PNC session issued a historical resolution on freezing and severing relations with the Egyptian regime. This affirmation by the PFLP leader undercuts all of the arguments that have been put forth by

some Egyptian writers who volunteered to defend PLO leaders, who denounced our attacks against the PNC resolution on severing relations with Egypt, and who also claimed that it was Egypt that severed relations with the Palestinians on the basis of false information communicated to the Egyptian command which believed it and hastily made its decision to close the PLO offices!

I cannot imagine what these writers have to say now after their claims have been refuted by the PFLP leader who recently concluded an alliance with Yasir 'Arafat, who has forgotten all of the support the Egyptian people and command have given him for the sake of concluding a flimsy alliance with his arch enemy and his principal rival.

The truth is that I did not want these Egyptian writers to be deceived in this manner and to be skeptical about Egypt's stand. Perhaps the shock that these writers have received will make them return to their senses and to their Egyptian affiliation, and will make them become aware of what they are being told secretly and what is openly concocted for their people and country!

/9738

CSO: 4500/101

AL-WAFD DEPLORES 'UNJUST' PLO STANCE ON EGYPT

PM081009 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 1 May 87 p 1

[Chief Editor Mustafa Shardi article: "All the Forces in Egypt are Nationalist"]

[Excerpts] I believe that Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat's personal wounds are no less painful than the new wound the Egyptian leadership has suffered because of an unjust Palestinian stand. It is enough to know that, as 'Arafat was accepting the conditions of the extremist group which is manipulated by Damascus and Libya, he was certainly aware that he was endorsing his own death warrant as a Palestinian leader. I have no doubt that Cairo is well aware of the tremendous pressures imposed on 'Arafat. Perhaps the man wanted to salvage the remaining Palestinians from the repeated Syrian massacres. It is true that he has put his head between the jaws of the beast sitting in Damascus, but he has done so after finding out that the beast was devouring the inhabitants of the camps, drinking their blood, and forcing them to eat the cadavers of their dogs and their dead without any effective Arab move being taken to halt these massacres. In the light of this tragic picture 'Arafat decided to commit suicide.

But it remains for the Palestinian leader to understand the motives behind Cairo's decision. First I must say that Cairo's decision regarding an official Palestinian presence in Egypt is the least harsh political decision taken against the PLO in its history compared with hundreds of Arab decisions taken against it. The Egyptian decision is thought to be strong or violent, or so some quarters describe it, because people are accustomed to Egypt's showing tolerance, remaining silent, and always being willing to behave like the big sister tolerating the children's play, even if their game is aiming daggers at its heart. All that happened this time was that Egypt had endured more than enough and so took a step expressing its anger. And because the step was taken by Egypt, with all its weight and reputation, it had the impact of an earthquake.

I say that it remains for the Palestinian leader to realize that in Egypt there are no nationalist and non-nationalist forces but one, cohesive people regardless of party or ideological affiliations. Destiny decreed that the leader of this people in the present time be one of Egypt's sons

who has given a lot for the Palestinian cause. Whereas 'Abd-al-Nasir was besieged in al-Faluja during the Palestine war, Husni Mubarak flew scores of missions in his military plane during wars in order to fight in defense of the Palestinian cause and Palestinian rights side by side with Palestinian fighter colleagues. It is unfortunate for the Palestinians that they failed to understand the depth of this aspect in Mubarak's personality. This political blindness has led to many crises, the latest being what happened in Algiers.

Egypt was deeply wounded at the Algiers [PNC] conference, and there are those who are deliberately rubbing salt into the wound to cause all Egyptians a painful burning sensation. This did happen, but the national interest now calls for this fire to be contained. The Algiers conference committed a sin against Egypt--of that there is no doubt. Egypt responded with a vehemence that is not in its nature. There is no doubt about that either. What is important now is that the crisis should be contained within the present limits, without further complications that could lead to more hostile stands between the two sides. Nobody will benefit from this except Israel, as usual. The Arabs are always both murderer and murdered, both killer and victim. Israel has killed fewer Arabs than the Arabs themselves have killed. The Dayr Yasin massacre now looks like a fracas in comparison with the camps massacres. I believe that Egypt has now, as it has always had, the initiative and the power either to widen the dispute or narrow it. Egypt is aware that prudent elements among the Palestinians stand with it or, rather, with their own cause because they are aware of Egypt's role, its sincerity, its loyalty, and the sacrifices it has made. They will realize that, if this complicated problem is ever to be solved, the solution, regardless of what it may be, can only come through Egypt.

The coming days will prove the truth of this reality.

/12858

CSO: 4500/97

CAIRO URGES PLO TO ADOPT STAND ON MIDEAST CONFERENCE

NC191202 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 16 May 87

['Atif al-Ghamri commentary: The Opportunity Now Available to the PLO Executive Committee]

[Text] An important part of the Israeli political thought is based on the principle of exploiting a fait accompli, relying on the fact that such an act will, in time, become internationally accepted, or will at least become difficult to change. In perpetrating faits accomplis, Israel gains potential bargaining chips in the event that attempts are made to negotiate a change. But, to a great degree, Israel does not depend on its own capabilities for accomplishing a fait accompli; Israel relies instead on the Arab stand itself. This Arab stand gives Israel enough room for maneuvering, keeping aloof and committed to the following principle: Either everything or nothing. Thus, the Arabs do not call for negotiations to declare their views, argue about them, and raise world-wide attention in order to assert the justice of their cause and to gain further international support.

No doubt the fact that the Palestinian issue has remained without a solution for 40 years can be attributed to a great extent to this prevailing principle. Furthermore, one of the more significant reasons for the Israelis' ability to carry out political maneuvers and continue to impose the fait accompli, which is manifested by the continuation of their occupation of Palestinian territory, is the Israelis' good utilization of their repeated pretext that it is not the Israelis who do not want to negotiate, it is the Arabs.

Taking all into consideration, the importance of the timing of the PLO Executive Committee meeting that has begun in Tunis to discuss PLO-Egyptian relations and prospects for peace in the Middle East then comes to light. This meeting takes place while an argument is escalating in Israel between Shim'on Peres, who calls for the convocation of an international conference on peace in the Middle East, and Yitzhaq Shamir, who rejects the conference and threatens to undermine any attempt at convening it.

The PLO can exploit this argument in favor of its own interests by taking a stand that would denigrate Shamir's opinion and reveal his main aims of obstructing the conference; that is, obstructing the settlement of the Palestinian issue and nonwithdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories. Shamir himself is making use of the PLO's stand to justify his own stand, by

saying: With whom shall I negotiate if the PLO itself is divided over the international conference? Therefore, the PLO is required to reach a formula that will put him in a difficult position and thus deprive him of any means of evading the international conference. In this way, adherence to the international conference will become a significant issue, and the form of the Palestinian representation will become a matter that will be utilized for reaching a final and just settlement, and not vice versa. This is not unrealistic. The Algerian National Liberation Front leadership also charged political figures not belonging to the front with representing them at international forums, beginning with Farhat Abbas who led the Algerian government-in-exile and who was succeeded by Ben Yousef Ben Khedda. When the Algerians' negotiations with France ended with the acknowledgement of the independence of Algeria, it was the National Liberation Front leaders who then entered Algeria to form the first government after independence.

/12913

CSO: 4500/104

EGYPT'S AL-BAZ ON PLO TIES, OTHER ISSUES

JN121049 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 11 May 87 pp 1, 24

[Patrick Seale dispatch from London]

[Text] Usamah al-Baz, political adviser to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, believes that Egypt's differences with the Palestinians are not serious and that they will end soon.

During his short visit to London al-Baz said that the resolutions adopted by the latest PNC session in Algiers are "a simple issue" which "will not affect the relationship between the PLO and Egypt."

The Egyptian president's political adviser emphasized two points: The first is that Egypt will continue to support effective Palestinian participation in a peace conference, and the second is that the reconciliation between 'Arafat and Habash has not changed the PLO leader's stand on peace.

Usamah al-Baz said: "Arafat still wants peace, but he is now compelled to consult with a wider group before the PLO is allowed to be represented at the international conference in one form or another. I do not believe he needs to obtain a total consensus."

Al-Baz continued: "Palestinian representation is the big issue. It is Egypt's responsibility and duty to find a solution. The PNC resolutions will force us to spend a longer time in healing the rift, but we must ultimately reach a new understanding."

In al-Baz' view the most probable solution to the problem of Palestinian representation is to return to the old formula of a Jordanian-Palestinian joint delegation. The abrogation of the Husayn-'Arafat agreement has not decisively killed that formula. Commenting on the formula al-Baz said: "We were very close to reaching agreement on the issue before King Husayn, and then 'Arafat, welshed on it. However, I believe it is possible to revive it."

Al-Baz explained the closure of the PLO offices in Egypt by saying that following the Algiers resolutions Egypt could not have "its prestige threatened". He added: "Egypt does not exert pressure on anyone, and equally the biggest and strongest Arab state cannot accept conditions imposed by others. Every Arab is free to reject the Camp David accords on the basis that they are inadequate for the Palestinians and that they do not constitute a comprehensive settlement. That is acceptable, for Egypt cannot retreat to the situation that existed prior to Camp David. What is important is to advance forward."

Dr al-Baz warned against excessive optimism over the international conference and declared: "The conference is not round the corner, it is still far away. I estimate it will require about a year to prepare for it. We must remember that the contacts and discussions among the parties at present are concentrated on purely procedural matters, and on issues that could be described as the mechanics of the conference. The essential issues have not been raised so far. What is new is that most of the parties--including Egypt and Jordan as well as Israel--are aware of the risks of prolonging the present deadlock. The other new development is that after 12 months of holding contacts the United States has rejoined the peace process. Washington has formulated certain general ideas on the way the peace process should move forward. The United States is now putting forward its views to the various parties."

Usamah al-Paz does not believe that the 1988 U.S. presidential elections will necessarily be an obstacle to the peace process, for both the Republicans and the Democrats are agreed on the need for peace in the Middle East, and it is improbable that the conference issue will have a prominent role in the elections campaign. He believes the controversial issue is the role which the Soviet Union will insist on playing.

Al-Baz says the Soviet Union should be put in the full picture from the very beginning, for it will not agree to participate if the revived peace is viewed as a special U.S. initiative.

Commenting on the split within the Israeli government on the conference issue al-Baz predicted that Likud will not dissolve the government as a result of the issue. He said Likud fears the elections more than it fears the international conference, and the possibility of convening an international conference remains remote so far. In order to keep the government coalition going, Likud will most probably review its stands and move from total rejection of the conference to the mere expression of reservations.

Al-Baz continued: "The Labor Alignment's stand is a real obstacle. Foreign Minister Peres wants to work only with Jordan. He believes Algiers (the PNC resolutions) have provided him with the opportunity to exclude the PLO. The Labor Party is still talking about territorial concessions, by which he means returning parts of the West Bank to Jordan, as originally outlined in the Alon plan."

Al-Baz added that the Labor Party continues to be opposed to any form of a Palestinian entity, for so far it has not progressed much further than the autonomy plan proposed by Begin, although the Labor Party is thinking of giving the local Palestinian authority wider powers in the transition stage.

According to the Egyptian view the Labor Party is so far not prepared to go far enough, and will not commit itself to anything specific until agreement is reached on the principle of holding the international conference. The decisive question for peace is how far the Labor Party will be able to move on fundamental issues. Referring to this matter al-Baz says: "One way or another the Palestinians must be given the right to self-determination."

Usamah al-Baz cast doubt on Israeli reports that King Husayn and Shim'on Peres reached agreement at a secret meeting on the conditions for a peace conference. He said: "There are still great differences between Israel's stand and Jordan's stand. However much the Israelis would like it, I do not think Jordan will play according to an Israeli scenario."

Al-Baz' remarks on Syria were reserved and carefully worded. He said that according to Egypt's assessment, President al-Asad does not oppose in principle the convening of an international conference, but even after the Soviet Union exerted pressure on him he still continued to refuse to announce the Syrian stand in detail. He said the Syrians may accept a unified Arab delegation comprising Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and the Palestinians. Al-Baz added: "However, President al-Asad may prefer to remain absent, wagering on the possibility that nothing significant may be achieved." Al-Baz hinted that Egypt will not be displeased with Syria's absence. He asserted: "If Syria opts to remain outside the conference, that will not prevent its convening."

Dr al-Baz criticized President al-Asad's argument that the Arab-Israeli conflict cannot be resolved, neither by peace nor by war, until the Arabs achieve strategic parity with Israel. He noted that such an analysis contains flaws, for there is no guarantee that the Arabs will make progress, and also Israel has certainly not reached its ceiling yet. Dr al-Baz concluded that although the possibilities for peace are somewhat brighter, no tangible result has been achieved so far, "and progress is still very delicate and could easily be hampered".

These are the balanced calculations of a man considered to be President Mubarak's most influential adviser.

/12858
CSO: 4500/98

EGYPT'S GHALI ON PEACE PROCESS

TA241130 Tel Aviv AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Apr 87 pp 10, 14

[Interview with Dr Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, by Pinhas 'Inbari in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] ['Inbari] What is your position on the new developments in the political process—the abrogation of the Amman agreement and the coalition difficulties within Israel?

[Ghali] Can we really speak about the abrogation of the Amman agreement as a fact, or is it only a rumor at this point?

['Inbari] This is what we read in the Cairo press this morning. This morning AL-AHRAM reported that Yasir 'Arafat has decided to cancel the Amman agreement.

[Ghali] I cannot react to a report whose veracity I am not certain of. However, our standing policy is that regardless of whether we are speaking of the Amman agreement or any other agreement, there is no alternative to close cooperation between Jordan and the PLO. We think this cooperation is part of the general cooperation among the Arabs. Both Jordan and the Palestinian people have an interest in maintaining close cooperation. It makes no difference whether this cooperation is implemented in line with the Amman agreement of February 1985 or any other agreement. This is none of our business. It is the business of the Jordanian Government and the PLO. It will be difficult for the PLO to act by itself, and it will be difficult for Jordan to act without the help of the PLO and the Palestinian people. This logic dictates that there is no alternative to close cooperation between the sides.

['Inbari] Do you think that Jordan has given the PLO a fair chance to resume the close cooperation between them?

[Ghali] I do not understand the question very well... This matter is between the the PLO and Jordan. We do not comment on the relations between the two sides. We are encouraging the continuation of the dialogue and cooperation between them. However, I refuse to enter the debate on who is responsible for the problems in the cooperation between the two,

because this does no good. The important thing is for us to encourage this cooperation.

['Inbari] In what way? There seems to be somewhat of an impasse.

[Ghali] There have already been difficulties dozens of times; ties have been severed and then renewed. There is no real difficulty in relations returning to what they were for the third or fourth time.

['Inbari] What is Egypt's attitude toward the proposed resolutions submitted to the PNC regarding Egypt and Jordan?

[Ghali] I have not followed these issues. What resolutions are you referring to?

['Inbari] Canceling the Cairo declaration on an end to violence or reformulating the Amman agreement.

[Ghali] You ask questions on resolutions that have not yet been passed. If such resolutions are passed, we will study them and then be able to react. It is not fair to react to resolutions that are still being debated.

['Inbari] I was asking about proposals...

[Ghali] I will not argue with proposals! At this stage these are academic issues which should be dealt with in universities, not in practice. When I will have these resolutions as facts before me, then I will be ready to react.

['Inbari] The PLO demands recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination in exchange for recognizing 242. Do you support this Palestinian demand?

[Ghali] Certainly. This is the standard Egyptian position. When you read the Camp David agreements you will find out that the term the right to self-determination has not been used, but rather the right to a referendum, the right to determine their future, and dozens of similar expressions. The cornerstone of Egypt's foreign policy regarding the Palestinian issue is that the Palestinian people have the right to self-determination just like any other people in the world, and there are hundreds of peoples who have realised this right.

['Inbari] Are there any differences between Egypt and Jordan in this respect, seeing that Jordan is demanding that the PLO recognize 242 unconditionally?

[Ghali] I do not know if there are differences. However, I want to say that our position is that there is no alternative to a Jordanian-Palestinian rapprochement.- As to the future of the problem, we believe that the Palestinian people have to implement their right to self-determination. The question is in what framework will they implement this right and what are the ways to bring this about. All this is open to discussion.

[Inbari] There is talk about the different forms of international conference, about a preparatory conference or a broad conference, direct talks or indirect talks. What is Egypt's position?

[Ghali] Egypt's position is linked to the positions of the other sides. What interests us is the movement, getting out of the stalemate, and one of the ways of doing this is the international conference. As to the details of the conference--Egypt is willing to discuss this with the other sides in order to find the broadest common denominator with everybody. However, we will not enter the details before we talk with the sides.

[Inbari] What about the issue of the Palestinian representation?

[Ghali] I am not willing to go into the details of this issue. We still do not have an opinion about this issue. What we are interested in is progress. The issue of Palestinian representation should be discussed between the concerned sides: Jordan and the Palestinians. We are willing to mediate, but the problem is not an Egyptian problem; it is a Palestinian and a Jordanian problem. We must therefore hear what these two sides have to say and fulfill our part in bringing them closer together.

[Inbari] Recently there has been a growing European involvement. Do you find the European involvement helpful?

[Ghali] It is certainly helpful. In 1979 I participated in a symposium in the European Parliament together with Moshe Dayan. The two of us expressed differing opinions; Moshe Dayan claimed that Europe should remain detached, while I said that Europe must be involved in the Middle East peace process. Europe has a leading role, whether in the framework of the EEC or in contacts with Israel and the United States. Europe has many channels of connections, whether through the Socialist International, trade unions, or other organizations. Europe is the United States' main ally, and we are interested in Europe increasing its involvement. Europe's security is linked to the security of the Middle East; there will be no stability in Europe if there is no stability in the Middle East, and therefore Europe has an interest in serving as a mediator. Moreover, it already is involved in many ways--it is part of the MFO and there was a European presence in Beirut. We are in favor of the European involvement; this is an ongoing and unchanging principle in Egypt's foreign policy.

[Inbari] Does the emphasis on the European role imply that Egypt is disappointed from the role played by the United States?

[Ghali] Not at all. The European role is an ongoing principle of Egyptian policy, and this was the case during and after the Camp David process as well. On the contrary, we are not saying that Europe can replace the United States, but Europe can pressure Washington, it can play a role along with the United States and the Soviet Union. What is the idea behind the international conference? Soviet and American presence.

['Inbari] What is Egypt's position concerning current events in Israel?

[Ghali] We are closely following the events in Israel, but we have no opinion. We will work together with the government which is in power. We signed the peace treaty with a Likud government, and now we are working with a national unity government. If tomorrow party A will come to power then we will work with party A; if party B comes to power we will work with party B. Now we are seeing that only half the government is functioning, while the other half is foiling the efforts of the first half. Let's speak frankly, Shamir is constantly contradicting Peres' statements...

['Inbari] Is there an intention of inviting Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir for a visit in Egypt?

[Ghali] I know nothing about this. This does not belong to my echelon. You should ask the prime minister about this.

['Inbari] Are the Camp David agreements still good for the present political process?

[Ghali] The Camp David agreements contain general principles, and they are still good.

['Inbari] Jordan and the PLO, however, do not accept the Camp David accords.

[Ghali] This is an attitude of slogans which has no significance. There are some ideas in these agreements which are suitable to the present circumstances.

['Inbari] Such as what? The Jordanian-Palestinian delegation?

[Ghali] Not necessarily. If you look at the Fes resolutions you will see that some of those ideas are already to be found in the Camp David agreements.

['Inbari] Such as?

[Ghali] An interim stage... the presence of international forces...a referendum...many ideas which are still suitable for the negotiations.

['Inbari] Do you think that Israel should have allowed the PNC members living in the territories to participate in the Algiers session?

[Ghali] Certainly. For many years we have demanded that relations of trust be built in the West Bank, and in this framework allowance of a political life for the Palestinians. There is no doubt that permitting the Palestinians in the West Bank to participate in the PNC session would have been a very positive step. However, I do not know whether the Egyptian Government asked Israel to take such a step.

['Inbari] What is your reaction to recent developments in the West Bank?

[Ghali] Our ongoing position is to denounce the Israeli occupation in the West Bank, and we denounce the fact that the human rights of the Palestinians are not honored in the spirit of the Geneva Convention. We denounce the principle of collective punishment on entire villages. All these acts of repression are in conflict with the peace agreements and endanger the peace. Our position has been clear since 13 October 1978, when we asked the Israeli Government to build up relations of trust in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, to defend the rights of the Palestinian people and to give them political freedom. The present situation might cause a deterioration in the territories. It endangers peace and is an obstacle to any improvement of relations between Egypt and Israel. We have been saying this for 10 years now.

['Inbari] In light of the unending difficulties are you optimistic regarding the peace process?

[Ghali] I am always optimistic. One must constantly work. We must get out of the stalemate. The status quo is not good for peace; the stalemate is not good for peace, not good for Palestine, Jordan, Israel and the entire region. We must move, we must open negotiations, whether in the framework of an international conference or any other framework. We believe that the international conference is the best framework for negotiations. However, we must move, because the lack of movement is a disaster, it endangers peace and stability in the region.

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CSO: 4500/98

AL-AHRAM LAUDS KING HUSAYN PEACE EFFORTS

JN170640 Ciaro AL-AHRAM in Arabic 15 May 87 p 3

[Editorial: "A Joint Strategy Respected by the International Community"]

[Text] The lightening visit paid by His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan to Egypt recently during which he held important talks with President Husni Mubarak asserted the constancy and depth of the two countries' joint strategy within the framework of their endeavors to advance peace efforts and support the initiatives to achieve Arab reconciliation.

The joint Egyptian-Jordanian course being pursued in the Arab and international arenas has become a clear reflection of the realism and effectiveness which enjoy respect and appreciation in various international fora because this course with its constancy and firmness is not affected by tactical variables or minor transgressions perpetrated by this or that party. In these circumstances, all eyes are turned on the joint strategic objective behind which all minor issues and small sensitivities are left, and this leads to a delineation of stands and policies.

The factors which led to the PNC session in Algiers and the resolutions adopted at that session have directly or indirectly reflected a transgression against Egypt and Jordan as well as a denial of their joint efforts to support and entrench Palestinian rights. However, the unfailing wisdom and clear vision of the leaders Mubarak and Husayn have managed to bypass all this, and the evidence of this is that the Palestine question and the prospects for convening the international conference were two of the most important issues discussed by the two leaders.

As for those who ignored the Egyptian role and the Egyptian people's sacrifices for the sake of the Palestine question, we want to tell them that events will prove to them in time that they have not only transgressed against Egypt, but have also perpetrated the main transgression against their people and cause because everybody is well aware that there can be neither peace nor war without Egypt.

Those who are using the Palestinian people's cause to protect their regimes in some Arab capitals must beware of the risks involved in their continuation of the game of one-upmanship which ultimately serves no party other than Israel

and its recent attempts to save itself from the consequences of attending the international peace conference.

The challenges facing the Arab struggle are grave and so are the responsibilities the Arab world must shoulder to curb the phase of deterioration and retreat afflicting the Arabs, to regain solidarity, and to bring about unified stands on pan-Arab issues, foremost among which is the Palestine question. Any delay in moving toward this objective will cost the Arab nation dearly. Hence, we wish with all honesty and sincerity that the sincere efforts being exerted by His Majesty King Husayn to heal the rifts in the Arab situation and restore solidarity to the nation before it is long overdue will be crowned with success.

/12913

CSO: 4500/104

COMMENTARY PONDERES CHANCES FOR PEACE CONFERENCE

NC121442 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 12 May 87

[Ahmad Sha'ban commentary: "Will There Be an Agreement to Realize the International Conference?"]

[Excerpts] Will the coming days see specific stands on the convocation of an international conference on peace in the Middle East? The United Nations, represented by its secretary general, has already begun preparations for the conference.

The Israeli stand is unresolved due to differences between the two sides of the ruling coalition, with each side holding fast to its stand. The Israeli inner cabinet has not yet managed to settle the argument or arrive at a compromise, according to reports. Though one should not jump conclusions, it is expected that Israel will accept Peres' view, which supports the convocation of the conference. Peres committed himself to this stand when he was prime minister, making this an official state policy rather than a personal view.

An important point to consider is the Arab stand in general, and the Palestinian one in particular. Have the Arabs finally agreed to convocation of the conference? We pose this question because some of those who had advocated the concept of this conference as the only and best means to attain peace have done an about-face and are now attacking it. The Palestinians, the party most directly affected, have not yet declared a clearcut stand on the conference or their possible participation.

If both the Israeli and the Arab stands are still vague, there are positive indications of international, particularly European, support for the conference.

In addition, the United States has abandoned its objection, in principle, to the conference, and Israel has also shown a readiness to study a formula of acceptable negotiations. These are indications that it will be possible to reach an agreement to hold this conference under UN auspices.

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CSO: 4500/101

SIDQI DISCUSSES DEBTS, PARIS CLUB AGREEMENT

NC231514 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1235 GMT 23 May 87

[Excerpt] Cairo, 23 May (MENA)—Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi has asserted that Egypt's agreement with the IMF does not constitute servitude; rather, it is a necessary step in the process of repaying Egypt's \$5 billion debt to a number of countries.

Dr 'Atif Sidqi added that Egypt's creditors comprise 14 countries, including IMF members the United States, Germany [not further specified], France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Australia, the PRC, and Canada. He pointed out that a debt rescheduling agreement requires an IMF declaration that the Egyptian economy is sound.

In an interview with the weekly magazine UKTUBAR to be published Sunday, Dr 'Atif Sidqi said the IMF has agreed to give Egypt a \$320 million loan in two installments.

Dr 'Atif Sidqi noted that Egypt disagreed with that organization on some measures which the latter had suggested Egypt should implement, including raising deposit and loan interest rates, abolishing subsidies, and freezing wages. The prime minister disclosed the agreement with the IMF deals with a number of reforms to be incorporated in the new economic plan aimed at redressing the balance of payments deficit including increasing exports, reducing imports, attracting remittances from Egyptians abroad, encouraging tourism-related revenue, and increasing production.

Dr Sidqi also referred to the Paris Club meetings, noting that Egypt owes money to the club's 14 member states. He revealed that debts owed to these countries for 1986, 1987, and 1988 total \$5 billion, noting the purpose of the meetings was to approve a five year grace period to begin in 1988. The prime minister said that Egypt will commence repaying its back debts over five years following the expiration of the grace period. He explained that during the grace period, no interest will be calculated on either the original loan or on the unpaid interest.

He emphasized the agreement with the Paris Club is the minimum that will be agreed upon with each debtor country through bilateral agreements.

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CSO: 4500/103

'ABD-AL-MAJID ON INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, GULF

NC201946 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 20 May 87

[Text] Dr 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has affirmed that President Husni Mubarak is determined to continue to uphold democracy and the freedom of opinion in Egypt, noting the freedom enjoyed by the Egyptian press and the various trends in the People's Assembly.

This statement was made during a meeting between Dr 'Abd-al-Majid and a delegation from the Canadian Defense Academy, now visiting Egypt as part of a tour of the Middle East. Dr 'Abd-al-Majid touched on the good Egyptian-Canadian relations, praising Canada's role in preserving peace through its participation in the multinational force in the Sinai. He also talked about the international peace conference in the Middle East, noting that the power that had been rejecting the convocation of this conference now shows an understanding of its importance. He hoped the Israeli prime minister would change his position in this respect.

Regarding the new escalation in the Gulf region, Dr 'Abd-al-Majid pointed out that Egypt is following the developments there with extreme concern, and that it is doing its best to help the parties reach a quick and peaceful settlement to the dangerous conflict.

He also spoke about the Egyptian role on the Arab, Islamic, and African levels, stressing Egypt's awareness of its responsibilities and its determination to pursue its basic objectives of stability, development, and peace, regardless of the obstacles.

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CSO: 4500/103

'ABD-AL-MAJID ON NONALIGNED, MEDITERRANEAN ISSUES

NC191839 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1540 GMT 19 May 87

[Text] Belgrade, 19 May (MENA)—Dr 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has warned that the failure to solve regional conflicts, such as the Arab-Israeli dispute, the Palestinian issue, the Lebanese crisis, the Cyprus issue, and other problems, will jeopardize the stability and security of the Mediterranean region, and will squander the chance for promoting cooperation among the Mediterranean countries. Dr 'Abd-al-Majid hoped that the ongoing positive exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union would create a "permanent state of reconciliation" between them, thus alleviating political tension, reducing the danger of military confrontation, and strengthening security in the Mediterranean.

The foreign minister's remarks were made in an interview with the Yugoslav magazine INTERNATIONAL POLITICS published today. k This is the first in a series of interviews by the magazine with the foreign ministers of the nonaligned countries of the Mediterranean region. The interviews, which the BORBA DAILY will publish the same day, are being conducted on the occasion of the second Mediterranean nonaligned countries' ministerial meeting scheduled for the first week of June on the Yugoslav island of Brioni.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that the Mediterranean's transformation into an area of peace and cooperation is a nonaligned objective supported by the United Nations. The basic factors to achieve this goal, he opined, are to eliminate the state of tension and to solve local problems in a way that realizes the regional peoples' aspirations and rights to live in peace and security. He affirmed that the region's disarmament and an agreement to increase the spirit of trust in the area would positively help promote peace and cooperation. In this connection, he stressed the importance of establishing a Mediterranean free from nuclear weapons as a substantial factor for achieving this objective. To facilitate this, Dr 'Abd-al-Majid called for promoting dialogue, terming it the sole method for serving common interests, which, in turn, represent a guarantee for a permanent peace. He emphasized the necessity of encouraging dialogue among the nonaligned and European Mediterranean states.

Regarding the areas of cooperation among the Mediterranean states, Dr 'Abd-al-Majid raised the possibility on the political level of uniting efforts to establish a more secure and stable "system of relationships" in the

Mediterranean Basin. As for the economic side, the advanced Mediterranean states can help the less developed nations in the region. He also cited prospects for cooperation in the environmental field and in combating terrorism. Dr 'Abd-al-Majid concluded by saying: Egypt is offering new spheres of cooperation among the Mediterranean countries; namely, respecting human rights and the basic liberties of human beings.

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CSO: 4500/104

AL-AHRAM ON SHAMIR-PERES CONFERENCE DEBATE

JN191946 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 18 May 87 p 7

[Editorial: "Israeli Symptoms"]

[Text] The voices within the Israeli Cabinet calling for an international conference or not have been equally divided. Half of the voices were given to Peres and the other half to Shamir. It also seems that the voices were equally divided between members of the two parties' in the Knesset on the question of dissolving parliament and holding early elections to settle this crisis. The controversy has even moved to the U.S. arena, where we witness, perhaps for the first time in contemporary history, the leaders of two rival blocs participating in the same coalition government address themselves directly to U.S. public opinion asking for support against the other bloc.

Peres leaves for Washington followed by Ben Aharon, director of Shamir's office. Every time one puts forth an argument to the U.S. circles, the other counters it with another argument. Each hopes the argument he puts forth will invalidate the other's argument. One cannot but express admiration because while everybody is speaking about the Israeli-Zionist influence in the U.S. arena we find here a reversed image of Israeli leaders asking for the U.S. arena to influence their policies. Having failed to settle this controversy within Israeli society in view of this tied score, they hope to end this impasse through U.S. public opinion's influence on Israeli public opinion. When we closely examine the situation, we find that it is not all U.S. public opinion they are after but only the influential trends in it which are none other than the Zionist circles.

Therefore, the two leaders are trying to put their case to a broader and more influential audience and hoping to get a vote of confidence from the horse's mouth. This alone is irrefutable proof that the question of whether to convene an international conference is an important historical turning point for Israel concealing a difficult choice about the future. They have to opt for security or danger, expansion or definition of borders, and other such vital matters which determine the fate and the future of a state and those who live in it.

Therefore, what is currently taking place is not a calculated distribution of roles as some claim, but a real struggle with Israel's survival at stake.

/12913

CSO: 4500/104

'ABD-AL-MAJID AL-AHRAM INTERVIEW

JN191845 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 18 Apr 87 p 3

[Interview with 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, by Anji Rushdi--place, date not given]

[Text] [Rushdi] We are very pleased with the EC agreement on convening the international conference. In your opinion, what practical use can come of this?

['Abd-al-Majid] We greatly welcomed the EC's positive step in its February statement. This shows the EC's interest and desire to work for peace and stability in the Middle East. We had been in close contact with the European states in order to urge them to take this step and step up their participation in the peace process. President Husni Mubarak played a fundamental role in this regard through his excellency's numerous meetings with the European leaders.

We are continuing our contacts with these states in order to go through with the idea of the conference and to prepare to hold it as soon as possible. Naturally, the European role is important, useful, and necessary, given that France and Britain are two permanent UN Security Council members and that Italy is currently a member. We hope that these states will contribute positively to the current discussions in the Security Council and the contacts with the UN secretary general to prepare for the conference.

We prefer this formula but we cannot impose our views on others. Europe plays a vital role in contacts with the United States, the Soviet Union, and the direct parties to the dispute to coordinate stands and cooperate to overcome obstacles to convening the conference. We had been awaiting the visit of Leo Tindemans, the Belgian foreign minister and current chairman of the EC ministerial council, to learn his views and concepts. We are looking forward to FRG Foreign Minister Genscher's visit to Cairo shortly.

[Rushdi] Don't you see that one of these obstacles is the U.S. position, and to be more exact Reagan's statement that the USSR and the Palestinians should recognize Israel and that bilateral negotiations will be necessary, be it through an international conference or any other means?

['Abd-al-Majid] When Reagan spoke about the Soviet Union, he in fact was referring to the restoration of ties with Israel. As for the Palestinians, he was stressing the need to accept Resolution 242, which I have always reiterated does not apply to the Palestinians because the Palestinian issue was not placed on the UN agenda until 1972. Therefore, it has to include the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. As for bilateral negotiations, I think that any international conference must lead to direct negotiations. There is no other way.

[Rushdi] Attempts to solve the Palestinian issue went from the Geneva peace conference to Camp David and then back to the international peace conference. Israel's genuine stand is that bilateral negotiations are indispensable. Peres accepts a conditional international umbrella and Shamir rejects the idea.

Don't you see that this is an attempt to dilute the issue so that there will be no progress in this field?

['Abd-al-Majid] The international conference is not a new idea. It goes back to 1973. In Resolution 383 following the October 1973 war, the Security Council called for an international conference to settle the Middle East dispute. The international conference was actually held in Geneva in December 1973 under UN auspices with the participation of Jordan, Israel, Egypt, the USSR, and the United States. Al-Sadat visited Jerusalem in 1977 and in December of that year Egypt called for the Mina House meeting also under UN auspices to prepare for an international peace conference. This process was not completed because the Arab sides refused to participate. Therefore, Israel was given the chance to dissociate itself from this formula.

Now the international conference is being discussed again, and Egypt is adopting this idea and doing its utmost to make it a reality. Egypt is also considering what took place at the 1986 Alexandria meeting between President Mubarak and then Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres in terms of Israel's acceptance of the idea of the international conference to be a great achievement that we should build on and utilize. We will not allow any moves in the opposite direction.

I repeat what I said in previous statements that in our opinion, Peres does not express his personal views but the Israeli coalition government's views. It is our duty as Arabs to utilize this and continue to try to convene an international conference. We should not allow those who seek to freeze the situation or obstruct peace to succeed.

[Rushdi] What is the true Palestinian stand? In other words, will it agree to a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation? Will it agree to PLO participation in negotiations in an official capacity or through individuals whom it would approve or select? Will it agree to Resolutions 242 and 338 as the basis for negotiations in addition to Egypt's contention there should be a right to self-determination for the Palestinian people? There have been many statements in this regard. What is Egypt's concept of this?

['Abd-al-Majid] Egypt has firm and clear stands whether regarding our recognition of the PLO as the Palestinian people's sole, legitimate representative, our affirmation that Palestinian representation in the international conference is an essential, necessary, and indispensable element, or the fact that the form of representation is up to the Palestinians themselves. Moreover, Egypt regards Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation and coordination as an important and indispensable basis for any effective Arab move to resolve the issue. Undoubtedly there have been a great number of Palestinian statements about this representation. Some of them speak of participation within an Arab delegation and some speak of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation including members which the PLO would select or accept.

I believe this important matter is still under discussion by the Palestinian brothers and that their final position on it will take into consideration the outcome of the current dialogue among the various factions on the proceedings, nature, and aims of an international conference and other aspects. We believe the important thing is to achieve a unified Palestinian stand. We have confidence in the wisdom of the Palestinians and hope they will arrive, at an appropriate time, at a formula which they would believe would achieve Arab and Palestinian interests by convening a conference.

As far as Resolution 242 is concerned, it is known the PLO rejects it unless the Palestinian people's right to self-determination is incorporated into the resolution. Egypt understands this stand. We actually believe this flaw in the resolution should be rectified. However, there is a fact which may elude some. When Resolution 242 was issued in November 1967 the Palestine question was not proposed for discussion at the Security Council. In fact, the issue was not even submitted to the United Nations for discussion and therefore it was not tackled at the time. However, the resolution has other important aspects in that it stipulates fundamental principles to which we must adhere. These are the inadmissibility of seizing land by force, the need for withdrawal from occupied territory, and the principle of exchanging land for peace. We say to the Palestinians: You can declare your acceptance of the resolution and link that to whatever you may deem necessary in terms of guarantees and controls to satisfy your just demand for the right to self-determination.

[Rushdi] On 26 April, 8 years will have elapsed since the return of Sinai to Egypt. How do you assess these 8 years, either negatively or positively, regarding Egyptian-Israeli relations?

['Abd-al-Majid] Undoubtedly the return of Sinai was a great achievement by all standards. It was achieved after Egypt proved its ability, whether on the battlefield during the glorious 1973 October war or during the arduous negotiations which followed. The October war was the turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict and fundamentally changed the balance between us and Israel. The Egyptian soldier confirmed his superiority and paved

with his blood the path for the Egyptian negotiation to wage the battle for peace from a position of strength. This resulted in the complete liberation of Egyptian territory and the establishment of peace relations between Egypt and Israel in accordance with agreements signed between the two countries.

Naturally, this achievement has enabled Egypt to direct its resources and capabilities to construction and economic development after long years of war had prevented this. As far as we are concerned, Egyptian-Israeli relations are progressing in accordance with Egypt's interests. No side can impose or force upon us what we do not accept. Our relations with Israel are governed first and foremost by the main factor--the interest of Egypt and Egyptians. It is normal for these relations to be positively or negatively affected by the progress of or delay in the comprehensive peace process in the region. Comprehensive peace was the Egyptian negotiator's aim from the start and will continue to be the goal for which we will do our utmost to achieve.

What has been achieved between Egypt and Israel needs to be completed and expanded to achieve all the Palestinian people's national rights and restore all the occupied Arab territories. It is clear to everyone Egypt has done everything through its contacts with Israel to achieve this aim. Thus, I believe the fact that the Palestine question and the Tabah issue have not yet been resolved is part of the negative aspects of Egyptian-Israeli relations.

[Rushdi] In my opinion, one of these negative aspects is the deteriorating Arab situation because of Egypt's long absence from the Arab arena.

['Abd-al-Majid] Egypt has never failed to play its full role in the Arab nation's causes, whether before or after the establishment of relations with Israel. Egypt's stand on the Palestinian people, the PLO, the Lebanese events, and its support for Iraq and the other Gulf states after the escalation of the Iran-Iraq War is enough evidence of Egypt's continuous Arab affiliation and its shouldering of its Arab responsibilities.

I do not think that it is fair to blame Egyptian-Israeli relations for the dismemberment of the Arab world. The ones who are responsible for this are those who are satisfied with raising slogans and trading in them, thus working to dismember Arab ranks without caring a damn about pan-Arab interests. Had the Arab states supported Egypt in the battle for peace, the results would have been better for all concerned.

I tell our Arab brothers sincerely: Unify your ranks and utilize and build upon what Egypt has accomplished. Benefit from Egypt's role and do not waste more time. The strength of the Arabs lies in their cohesion and unity.

[Rushdi] During his visit to Egypt Carter said that if he were allowed to go back in time, he would have Begin sign every word he said and every promise he made. He gave Israel's failure to stop building settlements as

an example. Can you comment on this statement, and have we benefited from our knowledge of the Israeli negotiator to prevent any attempt to tamper with the Tabah issue?

['Abd-al-Majid] Perhaps former U.S. President Jimmy Carter's statement explains the delicacy of negotiations with the Israeli side and the difficulties of it which require the other side to be very alert and careful.

Of course, we realized this from the very beginning of the Tabah talks, and therefore the Egyptian side was alert and careful about every word in the arbitral compromise. We avoided any possibility of misinterpretation which did not agree with what we meant. We also rejected any commitment that was not written down and anything that was not carefully stated.

No doubt, those who are aware of the legal terms in drafting agreements must appreciate the achievements of the Egyptian negotiators in the arbitral compromise. This was not easy to achieve. It was the result of long and arduous negotiations during which the Egyptian side was very alert to the Israeli side's maneuvers.

[Rushdi] Egypt and Jordan are concerned about the issue of U.S. supplies of arms to Iran. It is said that Egypt is trying to stop the U.S. arms supplies to Iran. Don't you see that the U.S. strategy in the region is different from what we think or what the United States itself reveals? What is Egypt's analysis of this problem and its stand on it?

['Abd-al-Majid] Egypt's principled stand on this issue is based on the need to end the Iran-Iraq War. We support Iraq and the Iraqi initiatives. We also support the UN secretary general's endeavors to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the conflict, and we regret Iran's failure to respond to peace calls.

On many occasions, Egypt appealed to states that supply Iran with weapons to desist. We drew attention to the seriousness of such actions because they will increase Iran's intransigence and encourage it to continue the war, which is now contrary to the Iranian people's interests. We continue to abide by this stand, which we made clear to the U.S. Administration. We upheld this stand even before the revelations about the U.S. role in supplying some arms to Iran, which surprised us and had a profound effect on all the Arab peoples.

No doubt, the U.S. Administration realized its erroneous calculations and the extent of the harm done to its interests in the region. We all know the large-scale reactions to these revelations in the United States and by U.S. public opinion.

The United States has affirmed that it has stopped arms supplies to Iran and that this will not happen again. I believe that the United States is currently trying to redress the situation, and we hope it will take effective steps to prove this.

[Rushdi] What are the international issues that the Foreign Ministry regards as vital and have to concentrate on in the forthcoming stage?

['Abd-al-Majid] Working for peace, stability, and development represent the main focus of our foreign policy aims. Naturally, the issue of peace in the Middle East and its various aspects are at the top of our agenda. Moreover, we are concerned with the issues of world peace and international accord, arms limitation, and supporting the Nonaligned Movement, ICO, and OAU. There are other issues that are directly related to our Arab world, especially ending the Iran-Iraq War, restoring stability in Lebanon, and supporting Arab solidarity. In Africa we believe that eliminating the racist regime in South Africa, achieving Namibia's independence, and entrenching security and stability in Africa are very important issues. Naturally, there are also the economic development issues in the Third World and tackling the debts of developing countries which must have higher priority in the forthcoming stage.

[Rushdi] How can Egypt benefit from the detente in our relations with the USSR within the framework of the USSR's attempts to resolve the issue of nuclear disarmament? What is Egypt's position on this issue?

['Abd-al-Majid] Undoubtedly, Egypt is eager to improve its relations with the two superpowers in a way that would benefit the Egyptian people's interests and is based on mutual respect, joint interest, noninterference in internal affairs, and complete adherence to the independent Egyptian decisionmaking. While we have relations of friendship with the United States we welcome the positive development in our relations with the USSR. For we would not be serving our interests by ignoring the role and weight of the USSR as a superpower with a responsibility to preserve world peace. Naturally, we appreciate the USSR's efforts to promote the peace process in the Middle East and its contacts with the United States, European countries, and the directly concerned sides to the conflict to convene an international peace conference. Egypt's stand is clear: It welcomes the USSR's positive participation in this conference and support for Arab and Palestinian rights.

[Rushdi] You believe that diplomacy for development is one of the main pillars of Egyptian diplomacy. We are about to enter a new stage: A new People's Assembly and a new term for President Husni Mubarak. In what issues can this diplomacy participate in the new stage amidst the economic situation from which Egypt is suffering?

['Abd-al-Majid] Undoubtedly, the tasks of diplomatic action have expanded under our country's circumstances and in view of our objectives which we are trying to achieve through our external moves. These are peace, stability, and development. In addition to the Foreign Ministry's role in implementing the foreign policy specified by the political leadership to serve national and pan-Arab interests, we find that taking care of Egyptian nationals abroad and taking diplomatic action to serve the economic and social development aims are enjoying top priority. President Muhammad

Husni Mubarak constantly emphasizes the importance of and need for complete cohesion between the government's internal and external moves. The foreign policy derives its strength from the cohesion and stability of the internal front; therefore, this policy must in turn contribute to supporting this front and benefiting from our foreign relations with various countries and international organizations to satisfy our domestic requirements. I am confident that Egypt, under its wise leadership and in view of the democracy it enjoys and the interaction between the people and leadership, is capable of achieving all its objectives in the forthcoming stage, especially since Egypt enjoys diverse and tremendous resources which promise our people a bright future, God willing,

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CSO: 4500/98

EGYPT'S ZAKI BADR ON ELECTIONS, SECURITY

JN290930 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 24 Apr 87 pp 26-28

[Interview with Egyptian Interior Minister Zaki Badr by Sana' al-Sa'id--date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Sa'id] The surprising results of the recent elections have prompted some people and the opposition to accuse the government, represented by the Interior Ministry, of rigging the elections and of partiality regarding the fronts that ran in the elections. Hence, your past guarantees have not worked, and your partiality toward certain trends has surfaced?

[Zaki Badr] This is an accusation lacking proof. The guarantees provided by the law have worked. The citizens expressed their opinions freely. The electoral committee were secured, the ballot boxes transported, the votes counted, and the results announced with full accuracy and impartiality. There were guarantees protecting the election process and preventing any attempts to cast doubts about it. The opposition used to repeat such things and to level false accusations. Before the elections, it said the elections would be rigged. It made this judgment in advance although it knew that all the legitimate political forces were given every opportunity to run in the elections without any partiality.

[Al-Sa'id] How do you explain the Interior Ministry's attempts to limit votes for the religious trend by arresting many members of the Muslim Brotherhood on the eve of the elections in order to foil their efforts to win seats in the People's Assembly?

[Badr] Before the elections, there were some elements unashamedly calling for fighting, death, and destruction during the election campaign. We could not wait until the fire started. Therefore, we took very limited preventive measures by arresting the elements which information had confirmed were involved in plans to disturb security before the elections. Those who said that the arrest of these elements influenced the voting process can be assured that these elements numbered only 500 persons, and they were arrested for security purposes, not to prevent them from voting. Their arrest was a security measure which had nothing to do with the elections. They raised the slogan: "A martyr for every ballot box". They

planned to impose their opinions on the voters. The legal measures against them were aimed at entrenching security and freedom during the elections.

[Al-Sa'id] Western media are inclined to describe the religious movement in Egypt as the most thorny and difficult problem and as a deep-rooted epidemic in Egypt?

[Badr] There is excess in depicting the religious radicalism in Egypt as the most acute problem facing Egypt nowadays. We should not magnify such things. Our assessment should be objective, accurate, and fair. We should view matters in their true context without any exaggeration. The number of these elements does not amount to anything. There are only several hundreds in the Asyut University. Their danger does not lie in their number, but in their violent method. Regarding the Western media, I do not know why they like to magnify incidents and stir up differences. I would like to stress that the number of these elements is limited. What is dangerous is that they are trying to recruit young men to join them. The government is fully aware of this plan, and is trying to immunize the youths against extreme ideas, especially since youths are the target in the first place because they adhere strongly to their beliefs. These youths are brainwashed to prevent them from believing in sound religious concepts. Because we are responsible for maintaining security we must abort any move or activity before it begins.

[Al-Sa'id] There is an impression that the security organ is trying to create hotbeds and clash with any radical group or organization regardless of its size?

[Badr] We do not want any clashes, but we confront any underground organization trying to work secretly and illegitimately. We monitor what is happening with alertness and accuracy. There will be no truce with those who violate the law. We are monitoring any violation of the law, and we will strongly strike at those who are trying to violate the law.

[Al-Sa'id] Regarding the results of the elections and the winning of 36 seats by the Muslim Brotherhood, how do you view the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood has stolen the limelight?

[Badr] The number of their seats in the People's Assembly does not allow them to steal the limelight. There is no denying they organized themselves well for the elections and they were intelligent in raising Islamic slogans which nobody rejects. We are not against any trend if it adheres to the law.

[Al-Sa'id] The success achieved by the Muslim Brotherhood reflects the popularity of both moderate and radical religious movements. The results of the elections prove that the political influence of the Muslim Brotherhood is growing. This will make it difficult for the security organs to dominate the growing religious movement?

[Badr] I must explain that we will not allow any activity against the law. We also monitor any activities regardless of their affiliation or source.

[Al-Sa'id] Do you mean that you are against any religious faction or group?

[Badr] My words are clear. We are not against the religious groups which work publicly and legitimately, but we are against those who exploit religion to achieve their goals and pursue violence and terrorism to shake the security of the homeland and the citizen.

[Al-Sa'id] This means that a large part of security efforts will be devoted to chasing religious elements?

[Badr] Egypt is an Islamic country, and it has scores of religious societies which conduct their activities publicly. Therefore, what you call a chase is merely security deterrence against radical groups trying to exploit religion and carry out terrorist actions. The law has the last word. We adhere to the law in all cases.

[Al-Sa'id] Following the gains of the Muslim Brotherhood in the elections, do you think their presence in the People's Assembly will increase the number of religious groups and decrease the number of those whom we call radicals?

[Badr] We distinguish between radical and moderate or political religious movements. Regarding their presence in the People's Assembly, there are laws in the assembly and the assembly has bylaws governing all members regardless of their trends. Successful members will represent legal parties. We neither know nor recognize what is called the Muslim Brotherhood within the People's Assembly, but there are legitimate parties represented by assembly members such as the NDP, the Socialist Labor Party, the new Wafd, and the Liberal Socialist Party.

[Al-Sa'id] But the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood in the People's Assembly is a reality because there are 36 members belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood?

[Badr] This party is outlawed, and we do not recognize it. Therefore, we do not recognize the presence of the so-called Muslim Brotherhood in the assembly. The members you have just mentioned entered the assembly within the ranks of the Socialist Labor Party and the Liberal Socialist Party. Therefore, we do not recognize what is called the Muslim Brotherhood because it is unconstitutional and illegal.

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CSO: 4500/97

ASYUT SECURITY CHIEF ON SITUATION, DRUGS

JN101708 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 8 May 87 p 25

[Interview with Major General Hasan 'Ali Sulayman, Asyut Public Security Department director, by AL-ANBA' in Asyut, Egypt--date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-ANBA'] Do you believe Asyut poses a larger security problem than all the other governorates?

[Sulayman] There is no doubt that Asyut requires special security efforts in view of the fact that there are many security manifestations with clear dimensions such as blood feuds and the cultivation of poppies which is banned, not to mention the crime rate which poses a very serious problem. In addition to all this, there is the manifestation of religious extremism. This does not facilitate the task of those who are responsible for security.

[AL-ANBA'] Has the so-called religious extremism taken precedence over the crimes resulting from the blood feuds?

[Sulayman] One cannot compare the crimes resulting from blood feuds to those stemming from religious extremism. They are different. However, the two are motivated by extremism. This extremism is the result of the harsh living conditions, the concepts prevailing in the society, as well as the severe climate. The extremists concept of religion is a violent one while religion in reality advocates moderation, wisdom, and good deeds.

[AL-ANBA'] The Islamic groupings, particularly in Asyut, accuse the Asyut security authorities of suppressing their freedom of expression. What do you have to say to this?

[Sulayman] This is an unfounded claim. We try our best to open houses of worship to all worshippers. The Muslims in Asyut have the same rights as all the other Muslims in other Islamic areas. However, we do not accept mosques becoming rostrums for vituperations, for slander against the government and state officials, and for leveling accusations of infidelity at the government which opened universities and housing complexes for students where they can reside in exchange for symbolic prices, and

which seeks to secure jobs for those who graduate. What kind of religion is this which allows mosques to become rostrums for preaching ingratitude? If we try to guide them, they consider this suppression of their freedom of expression.

[AL-ANBA'] But the members of the Islamic groupings justify their acts of violence as a reaction to their persecution by the police?

[Sulayman] On the contrary, we treat these young men in a fatherly manner. We always advise them to come to our offices to solve their problems. However, we regret to say that ossified ideas and extremism dominate their minds, although the methods to which we recently resorted in reaching an understanding with them have somewhat subdued them and restored security. We also do not resort to the method of confrontation and of clashing with them as they claim.

[AL-ANBA'] But you have banned such Islamic figures as Dr Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and Shaykh Ahmad al-Mahallawi from Asyut and from giving religious lectures there while opposition leaders are being allowed to hold mass meetings in the city.

[Sulayman] Asyut is in Egypt, which is open to all Egyptians. We have no suppression of speech. However, there are laws regulating meetings, symposiums, and public gatherings. Dr 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman was once a leader of the al-Jihad organization, and Asyut has a unique security situation. Hence the security precautions when someone like Dr 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman visits Asyut. As for visits by political figures of the opposition parties, this speaks for the tolerance of the security authorities and the freedom they guarantee for all as well as the protection they provide for the opposition just like they provide for other members of the public.

[AL-ANBA'] Asyut has had a notoriety for growing poppies. In reality, has this notoriety any basis or is it exaggerated?

[Sulayman] Such illicit plants were indeed grown extensively, but a vigorous anti-drug campaign has been in force for many years. I was part of that effort in the three tenures I served there. During our raids we discovered large tracts grown with poppies. Thanks to the anti-drug campaign, there has been a marked decrease in the areas where poppies are cultivated. However, four days ago, we discovered a plot with 160,000 herbs. These places are very remote, lying to the east of the Nile. Growers think they are out of reach of security authorities, but thank God police are present everywhere.

[AL-ANBA'] Some have been sounding the alarm against sectarian sedition in Upper Egypt. How does Asyut figure in this danger?

[Sulayman] Asyut is currently free of any sectarian sedition. Muslims and Christians live there in harmony.

[AL-ANBA'] And the so-called phenomenon of the crosses that appeared superimposed on dresses of veiled women through the actions of some Christians?

[Sulayman] I investigated the issue and found no clue to substantiate these rumors spread to split the people and fish in troubled waters.

[AL-ANBA'] And who do you think these tendentious people are?

[Sulayman] Muslims, Christians, and communists live side-by-side in Egypt. Muslims stand to gain nothing from spreading such rumors since they would harm good neighborly relations with their fellow Christians who would suffer just as much. As for the communists, they would benefit from spreading these rumors by putting the Muslims and Christians in conflict with security authorities.

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CSO: 4500/97

NPUG LEADER VIEWS RECENT ELECTIONS

JN201745 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 15 Apr 87 p 7

[Interview with NPUG Secretary General Khalid Muhyi-al-Din by AL-AHALI correspondent Hasan Badawi--date, place not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted on background of recent elections and incidents during the election polling in the various constituencies]

[Badawi] What is the difference between these elections and previous elections?

[Muhyi-al-Din] I have seen several elections, including the infamous 1979 elections. However, the interference in all the previous elections took place during the ballot counting. It is true we used to open the ballot boxes and find the tickets tampered with or damaged, but at least we used to attend the ballot counting. However, during these elections our representatives were not allowed to attend the counting in some committees and when they were allowed to attend the counting it was done so that they could not follow the numbers of the ballot boxes.

[Badawi] How did the alliance and the Wafd Party manage to win despite this interference?

[Muhyi-al-Din] The ability to confront the interference differs from one party to another and this is a fact we must face. There are parties with greater financial resources and more infiltration in the state organs and that have religious or tribal backing. However, our party merely depends on the ordinary man in the street, and the ability of this man to confront pressures is very limited. However, the alliance, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Wafd--the tribalists--have a greater ability to confront or resist pressures and dominate entire areas. This does not conceal the fact that the representatives of the alliance and Wafd were expelled from several places. Moreover, we are not an underground party and we have supporters who can confront pressures. We are a new party whose members have not had long experience in election battles. The Muslim Brotherhood, on the other hand, is an old movement and has a presence in every village and work in shari'a establishments and Koran learning societies. Although these societies are essentially religious they practice

politics. I would also like to affirm that we face tremendous pressures and our men stood fast, but the extent of their steadfastness was far less than the pressures. [Passage omitted on the fall of the war production minister and incidents against opposition election campaigners.]

[Badawi] How do you envisage the future in light of this interference and the current assembly's structure?

[Muhyi-al-Din] During these elections the NPUG wanted to have the image of a compromise party which rallied around it the nationalist and democratic forces, but it failed to do this. The main opposition is the Muslim Brotherhood and not the Labor Party, and the leading wing of the Muslim Brotherhood is part of the school that favors an open-door policy despite the fact that they advocate an Islamic solution and Islamic banks. The majority of them own financial and trading establishments. Thus, this wing can finance itself and has a large army of employees and workers in its establishments. It is not a mere political trend but also an economic one. Despite its enlightened democratic and liberal views, the Wafd Party does not differ much from this movement on the economic and social issues. Therefore, I do not believe that such an assembly will find solutions to the economic crisis at the expense of those who can bear the burden. We believe that any solutions to the crisis demand sacrifices and shouldering burdens. Our difference with the ruling party is over who should bear the burden, those who can or those who cannot. We call for canceling exemptions for investors, for finding genuine resources for development, and for financing development from genuine resources. On the other hand, they want to maintain the status quo, carry out unessential reforms, and make those who cannot bear burdens bear them. If public opinion acts and exerts pressure, they would not be able to ignore this.

[Badawi] What do you have to say to the NPUG members, the Egyptian people, and the citizens of northern al-Qalubiyah?

[Muhyi-al-Din] I would like to say to the NPUG members that we lost two battles but we must not lose our will to continue because this party and movement are destined to continue and expand. The people may not have given us their votes, but that was our fault and, of course, there was the flagrant interference. However, I do not believe that this was the main reason. We are a progressive, nationalist, and unionist party capable of boldly and courageously discussing and overcoming its mistakes. For our election manifesto received an extensive welcome and acceptance by the masses even though this was not translated into votes. This is due to our activities, organization, and mixing with the people. We must revise and rectify our action. I believe that the NPUG is the party of the future because the majority of its masses are young people and this was very clear during the election battle. We have to be patient and remain steadfast.

I can only thank the Egyptian people and the sons of the northern al-Qalubiyah constituency for I cannot ask of them more than they have given. I thanked the sons of this constituency in AL-AHRAM because I found in them a great

response and extensive activities to defend our party. We must revise our election methods and political action with the masses. The others have relatively overcome the difficulties and we can do the same. The NPUG and the Egyptian left are greater than the votes they received but rallying the masses around us requires a great deal of work and preparation. We must start now to prepare for the next local and general elections. I would like to point out that the number of votes which were declared void or null amounted to 500,000, and I believe that the NPUG had 250,000 votes among them. For example, I saw a very large number of votes at the Tukh center for the NPUG and for me which were crossed out and suspiciously invalidated. I reiterate that we can stop all these methods in the future by mobilizing the masses around us as of now in all the popular and election battles in preparation for the next local and general elections.

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CSO: 4500/98

EGYPT'S 'ATIF SIDQI MEETS WITH PRESS

JN081028 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 8 May 87 pp 1, 19

[By Ahmad Shakir]

[Text] Egyptian Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi has asserted that the international peace conference is the ideal framework for finding an honorable way for all the parties to the Middle East issue to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. He said Egyptian efforts in that regard will not cease, the resolutions of the PNC session held recently in Algiers notwithstanding.

During his meeting with the editors in chief of the Jordanian papers and the chiefs of information departments at the Jordan Intercontinental Hotel on the evening of 6 May, a meeting that lasted until the early hours of 7 May, Dr Sidqi said he discussed with Prime Minister al-Rifa'i and senior officials the latest Arab and international developments, and analyzed what happened at the PNC session in Algiers and the developments that could happen in the future with regard to the international conference.

The meeting was attended by Muhammad al-Khatib, minister of information; 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egyptian deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Yusuf Wali, Egyptian deputy prime minister and minister of agriculture and food security; and Safwat al-Sharif, Egyptian minister of information.

Sidqi said his visit and the ministerial delegation's visit to Jordan came within the framework of Egyptian-Jordanian relations defined in late 1984 which were consolidated by His Majesty King Husayn and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. He said the regular meetings of the Jordanian-Egyptian Joint Committee are proof of the good state of relations between the two fraternal countries. He noted that the present session differs from previous sessions in that it will move to the stage of actual implementation and work.

Dr Sidqi added that on the sidelines of the joint committee's meetings in Amman he discussed international and Arab events because it was necessary to touch upon topical issues and the questions that are being raised, and attempt to analyze the circumstances and aims.

"Discussions were held with the Jordanian side to analyze the last PNC session in Algiers, the proposed international peace conference, and our expectations for the next few months," he said.

Dr Sidqi emphasized that Egypt adheres to its position that the international peace conference would be the best forum for an honorable way out for all those concerned in the Mideast issue. Egypt's moves in this regard, said Sidqi, will not cease. Egypt is now trying to reconcile its ideas with recent developments before it makes a decision on the issue, he added.

Dr Sidqi said that while Resolution 242 alone is not enough as a basis for a solution to the Mideast problem, its acceptance is a precondition for convening the international conference, and if the conference is held it will discuss the Palestinian problem in detail to find a solution.

"I fear the conference may be convened without the attendance of the PLO which has rejected it and refused to recognize Resolution 242," said the Egyptian prime minister. He emphasized that the PLO must be involved in any solution, and denied that Egypt or Jordan are thinking of creating a substitute for the PLO. Dr Sidqi hoped the Palestinians will avail themselves of the opportunity presented by the international conference, having squandered many chances. He stressed that a solid, united Arab stand would be a strength at the conference, reflecting positively on the Palestinian cause. The attainment of peace and its maintenance depend on the level of preparedness and might, which Egypt had when it triumphed in the October war.

Meanwhile, Dr 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, Egypt's deputy prime minister and foreign minister emphasized that led by His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Mubarak, Jordan and Egypt maintain distinguished relations. Dr 'Abd-al-Majid said Egypt has a clear stand on the international conference, calling it the right forum for solving the Palestinian problem. He observed that there are obstacles to the convening of the conference. "Our visit to Jordan was a valuable opportunity for an exchange of views and consultations on the next stage," said the Egyptian minister.

Dr 'Abd-al-Majid declared that Egypt adheres to the Palestinian cause and is defending it despite the Algiers conference resolutions since Egypt is convinced the Palestinian people have been the victims of injustice.

The international conference is not an end in itself, he said, but a framework to guarantee all the rights of the parties concerned.

The Egyptian foreign minister said Israel is split on the conference. He called these divisions part of the Israeli maneuvering, and said Egypt is adopting a wait-and-see attitude. Should the conference fail to materialize, added 'Abd-al-Majid, a peaceful solution to the problem and upholding the Palestinian people's right would still be planks of Egypt's foreign policy.

Asked about the possibility of abrogating the Camp David accords, he said Egypt has never reneged on an international agreement it has concluded. An abrogation of the Camp David agreements would add up to a declaration of war on Israel, said 'Abd-al-Majid.

The minister said the PNC rejected the idea of an international conference based on Resolutions 242 and 338, both of which address two key principles: The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, and land for peace.

If the international conference is held, 'Abd-al-Majid said, it will have no power to impose anything on any party but would help the parties work out a suitable solution. He stressed that the PLO is a principal partner in any Mideast peace settlement. He urged adherence to the Amman agreement because it is a clear working paper between the Jordanians and Palestinians. He questioned what the Palestinians want if they are interested in a peaceful solution but recognize neither Resolution 242 nor the international conference.

'Abd-al-Majid urged a unified Arab stand since talks at the conference would be arduous and a united Arab position should be a major contribution to the success of the conference. He said Egypt welcomed the restored unity of Palestinian factions and added that Egypt views every Arab meeting similarly.

The Egyptian minister reiterated his country's condemnation of Israeli settlement policies and aggressions against any Arab area. He recalled that Egypt withdrew its ambassador in Israel during the invasion of Lebanon and he was returned only after Israel pulled back to the border strip in hopes it would complete the pullout.

On Syrian-Egyptian contacts, 'Abd-al-Majid emphasized that since the chance meeting between Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad, no meetings have been held. He declared that Egypt harbors love for Syria. Egypt viewed Jordanian-Syrian rapprochement as a step on the road to Arab solidarity, he added. "We disagreed with Jordan over Camp David and we still do, but this has not stood in the way of the bonds between the two brotherly countries," 'Abd-al-Majid said.

Concluding, he asked: "Can we differ and still respect each other? This is the cultural challenge!"

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CSO: 4500/97

EGYPT'S ABU-GHAZALAH ON MILITARY AFFAIRS

JN101140 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 8 May 87 pp 12-15, 71

[Interview with Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Abu-Ghazalah, Egyptian deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production, by Sana' al-Sa'id--date and place not given]

[Excerpts] [Al-Sa'id] Following fears over the increasing Iranian threats against navigation in the Gulf, the two superpowers--the Soviet Union and the United States--expressed a growing desire to reinforce their presence in the region. In your opinion, which of the two countries is better able to curb Iran's defiance?

[Abu-Ghazalah] You are asking me a hypothetical military question and I will give a hypothetical military answer. The science of directing conflicts defines the levels and effects of a conflict and any other measures required to follow up the escalation of the conflict by the parties concerned or those affected by this escalation. In strategic decisions matters are accurately calculated and revised once, twice, and three times. Some armed conflicts do not require the intervention of foreign parties, whether local, regional, or international. Other conflicts require intelligence and information about what is happening. This may be accompanied by a third party's show of force. Hence, there is an escalation of a conflict which raises the degree of preparedness of foreign forces in preparation for a limited or comprehensive military action. [Passage omitted on how Iran is jeopardizing Gulf navigation.]

[Al-Sa'id] How practical is Gorbachev's offer to maintain security and stability in the Mediterranean? In your opinion, what steps should be taken to consolidate security in this area? Can this proposal be implemented although the Mediterranean is of strategic importance to NATO?

[Abu-Ghazalah] The Egyptian military concept has reservations over the form and content of the question. It is true that the naval military activity in the Mediterranean exceeds half of the world naval military activity. It is also true that there is a saying that the Mediterranean is a NATO lake and another saying that the world naval activity in the Mediterranean is not part of a military strategy but a political strategy aimed at supporting the progressive forces in the area. However, these two

sayings, which are held up by the two superpowers do not settle the situation nor can they alone ensure security in the Mediterranean. There are 15 Mediterranean littoral states, some of which belong to NATO or the Warsaw Pact while the rest are either neutral or biased.

Also, from the Egyptian viewpoint the Mediterranean is not one stretch of water whose problems can be solved through agreement between the two superpowers only. Turkey and Greece, two NATO members, are fighting in the Aegean Sea. Sovereignty over the Gibraltar Strait is under discussion between two other NATO members, Britain and Spain. Albania has policies different from those of the Eastern Bloc. Cyprus has its problems. The Middle East problem has not yet been solved and the involved parties deal with this problem from different angles. Morocco has its problems in the western Sahara. Last but not least, there is Libya and its actions. All these are problems which attract several parties.

[Al-Sa'id] In the light of all that you have said I would like to ask: What is the Egyptian military view toward the Mediterranean?

[Abu-Ghazalah] The Egyptian military concept views the Mediterranean as consisting of several areas of tension and not as one stretch of water. Naturally, any escalation of tension in a Mediterranean area may cause tension in the other areas. But what is important is that these areas are not marked by lines distinguishing between NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries. This makes the position or role of the two giants extremely important but not completely decisive.

The Mediterranean is about 4,000 km long with a maximum width of 1,800 km. It is full of straits and islands which shortens distance for military forces. This means that any point in the Mediterranean can be reached by the modern fighter bombers in the shortest possible time due to their high speed. Moreover, the rapid development of mobile anti-ship missiles can play a major role in stabilizing or destabilizing the Mediterranean. I am saying this to clarify two military facts. First, the Mediterranean has become a small sea from the geostrategic viewpoint. Second, the Mediterranean littoral states now possess highly advanced military capabilities that allow them either to enhance security or to create further tension in this region. The matter is no longer up to the fleets of the two superpowers nor is it contingent on whether or not they maintain a naval presence here.

The latest military statistics showed that 11 of the 15 Mediterranean states possess more than 300 modern fighter planes fitted with the most sophisticated devices and weapons. Most of these planes have offensive capabilities. The statistics also showed that the number of submarines possessed by these states has tripled and that the modern multi-mission frigates have become a major component of the Mediterranean states' naval forces. Furthermore, the statistics showed that 13 of the 15 Mediterranean states currently possess the most sophisticated versions of guided anti-ship missiles and also that at least 10 of these states possess

quick-assault gunboats fitted with the most accurate naval missiles. This gives you an idea of the military assault capabilities of the Mediterranean states which suffer from disputes and conflicts and which often wage wars against one another even though they are members of the same alliance or grouping.

[Al-Sa'id] Can we infer from this that the naval presence of the United States and the Soviet Union does not have the great significance some parties attach to it, and consequently does not monopolize influence concerning the security and stability of the Mediterranean?

[Abu-Ghazalah] The naval presence of the two superpowers may influence the security and stability of the Mediterranean, but this presence is not the only influential and decisive factor for this security. We have witnessed the emergence of many ideas and proposals which sought to turn the Mediterranean into a sea of peace. Some ideas which sought to bring about a limited arms reduction or a comprehensive arms reduction also emerged. Other ideas stipulated that the non-Mediterranean naval forces must not be allowed to maintain any presence in the Mediterranean. All of these are expressions of political aspirations that must be based on military reality. I have already explained to you a part of this military reality. Perhaps, the most positive step that could be taken in this regard is a meeting among the representatives of the 15 Mediterranean states to draw up a common naval convention that specifies naval relations in the Mediterranean; and then we can speak about the security and stability of the Mediterranean. [Passage omitted on mistake of discussing a state's defence expenditure in general.]

[Al-Sa'id] What about the Egyptian defense budget? What is the percentage of this budget compared to the gross national income? Can we say that our armament program is gaining further momentum? And what do you have to say to those who believe that the expansion of the armament program constitutes pressure on resources?

[Abu-Ghazalah] The defense budget is one of the most important issues that preoccupies the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces Command. I am not divulging a secret when I say that the Armed Forces have begun to display a comprehensive scientific interest in defense economy only after the implementation of the peace treaty. When we need a piece of equipment in the past, we used to buy it. Nowadays, when we are confronted with such a situation, we conduct deep studies using computers to determine the cost of each armament program and to discuss the alternatives in light of the cost versus the military benefits to be gained and the cost versus the positive effects of the armament program on our national security in its entirety.

For example, we calculate the cost of any possible change on the armament levels that we have before we make a decision on that change. We compare the cost of retaining an armament system with the cost of changing or developing that system and so forth and so on. However, there are some scientific facts and figures which are taken into account when preparing

the budget. These facts and figures are basic tenets of the defense economy science. They are the following:

--The international average of the defense budget of states which live in stable regions extends from 9 to 13 percent of the Gross National Product.

--The defense budget increases by 70 percent of the average annual increase in the Gross National Product. Then, if the increase in the Gross National Product for a year amounts to 4 percent, the defense budget increases by 2 percent.

--There is annual increase in the current expenditure used to maintain equipment and men at the best possible level of preparedness. The 1.5 to 2 percent increase is added to make up for the increase in international prices.

--The armament programs extend over a specified period of time beginning with awarding or signing contracts and training and ending with entering service. For example, if we allocate \$50 million in 1987 to buy a piece of equipment, the amount will be distributed over 3 to 4 years, when the equipment enters active service in the Armed Forces.

As you know, we are now undergoing a modernization program for the Armed Forces. This modernization phase will lead to replacing and changing most of the equipment we bought in the late sixties and early seventies. This may be an answer to your question concerning the growing momentum of the armament program. The real issue does not concern a growing momentum of an armament program. The whole thing concerns phases of modernization of the Armed Forces to enable them to catch up with the latest developments of the modern era. These phases are outlined in 5-year and 10-year plans.

[Al-Sa'id] There is still controversy over whether military expenditure constitutes pressure on revenues.

[Abu-Ghazalah] Regarding this point it suffices to say that we are getting \$1.3 billion U.S. grant annually to purchase military equipment. Hence, we are talking about what is in excess of this figure in the defense budget. The economic question here is whether it is better to use this sum in excess of the grant in economic projects or continue to channel it for national defense and security affairs. Needless to say there are priorities in allocating state revenues for the attainment of objectives. Out of our pan-Arab commitment, we are trying to curb military expenditure as much as possible within the framework of calculated dangers called the building of the armed forces to confront the least possible threat and not the largest possible threat. All know that we have reduced the size of the Armed Forces and developed the mobilization system. We are rationalizing expenditure. We have also promoted production and investment in order to ease the burden of defense expenditure. As for the defense budget compared with the Gross National Product, it is less

than 8 percent. Moreover, any curtailed purchases of Egyptian-made equipment affects not only the national security but also the war production factories, their manpower, efficiency, and economies.

[Al-Sa'id] More countries now possess chemical weapons. How true are the reports that Egypt, helped by a Swiss company, is now producing such weapons? Can Egypt independently manufacture chemical weapons?

[Abu-Ghazalah] You are raising an extremely important and sensitive issue. Most people immediately think of poisonous gases when talking about chemical warfare. The subject is deeper and more comprehensive than this. In 1925 most countries signed the Geneva Convention which bans the use of poisonous gases in wars. However, these countries differed in their interpretation of this convention. While some said this convention completely bans the use of poisonous gases, others like the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, France, and China said it bans them from being the first to use them and thus they had the right to possess them in order to deter their opponents if they resorted to using such gases. However, science has developed other types of gases such as nerve gases which affect the fighter's ability and causes him temporary partial disability for hours or days with the minor possibility of death. Hence, the chemical warfare industries are set up by:

1. States which are thinking of producing poisonous gases and we are absolutely not among them. We have signed the 1925 Geneva Convention to which we are fully committed.
2. States which are producing debilitating, but not deadly, nerve gases.
3. States which are producing chemical warfare protection equipment and we are one of these states. The chemical warfare equipment we are producing is protective material in the form of gas masks, antitoxic materials, protective clothes, or antiseptics. Those following the Egyptian Armed Forces' military exercises in the field of chemical warfare know that these forces are trained on how to protect themselves from chemical assaults and how to overcome them if they occur. They are not trained to carry out chemical warfare. The military knows that each of the Eastern and Western blocs has deterrent warfare capabilities to counter the other side if it embarks on such a war.

[Al-Sa'id] Does this mean that Egypt is not one of the countries producing offensive chemical warfare equipment?

[Abu-Ghazalah] Yes, we are not producing offensive chemical warfare equipment whether they are poisonous or nerve gases. Naturally we are developing our ability to produce the materials which can protect the Armed Forces against any chemical attacks. We have a long history in the field of producing this protective equipment and we do not need foreign expertise in this regard except when a new type of poisonous or nerve gas appears. We seek foreign expertise in the field of joint studies to quickly discover the required protection methods and means.

[Al-Sa'id] But we know that nuclear deterrence helped secure the longest possible period of peace in Europe. Why does Egypt not try to concentrate on nuclear weapons as a deterrent as a reserve security alternative, especially since Israel and some Arab countries of less impact and capabilities than Egypt have been stating that nuclear weapons are vital for their security?

[Abu-Ghazalah] The statement that peace in Europe is due to nuclear deterrence is not strategically accepted by all sides without discussion. There are some who agree to this statement and this means that other parties living in areas of wars and instability are entitled to possess nuclear military capabilities. Other parties believe that deterrence is much older than the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs and that it can play a role in reducing tension and curbing wars without nuclear weapons but through the distinct traditional deterrence. [Passage omitted on peace in Europe.]

As for Egypt's possession of nuclear weapons, you may know that Egypt is one of the countries which had signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty out of concern for the entire human race. Nevertheless, I wonder how things would be if we entered the field of nuclear weapons at a time when there are some who complain about the size of military expenditure on traditional weapons. I would also like to indicate here that with all its destructive effects the Chernobyl disaster was not caused by a nuclear bomb but by a nuclear reactor. Hence, the nuclear effects may be caused by many other factors and not only by possessing nuclear capabilities.

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CSO: 4500/97

ECONOMY MINISTER HOLDS NEWS CONFERENCE

NC111658 Cairo MENA in English 1555 GMT 11 May 87

[Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)--Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Dr. Yusri Mustafa said the new economic decisions and the new system of exchange rates will take effect as of today.

At a press conference the minister held today he indicated that the new regulations represent the first step towards unifying the currency exchange rate system and will cover 40 percent of the commercial dealings while the remaining 60 percent will be subject to the rate set by the commercial banks complex which is 1.35 Egyptian pounds per dollar.

The customs duties will be accounted according to the commercial banks complex, he added.

Also speaking at the press conference was the governor of the Central Bank Dr. Salah Hamid who said there are sufficient reserves at the banking system for backing the new regulations.

As of today, the minister of economy said, the banks operating in Egypt and licensed to deal in the Egyptian pounds and the foreign currencies will be allowed to buy and sell foreign currency for their own account and on their responsibility within the new exchange free market.

The new market will be run by an eight-man board made up of representatives of the approved banks and will be in charge of announcing daily selling and buying rates for foreign currencies on a realistic basis.

The economy minister said the new free market rates will apply to the commodities which are the least affecting the cost of living of the ordinary citizen, and therefore the rate of the commercial banks complex of 1.35 Egyptian pounds per dollar will remain effective for providing the allocations needed for the import of vital commodities.

According to the new system, the private-sector imports will be exempted from the free currency deposit at the Central Bank, Governor of the Central Bank Dr. Salah Hamid said at the conference.

Asked about further steps, Dr. Mustafa said the new regulations will mark the beginning of other steps towards setting up a free market that will fix the rate of exchange of the Egyptian pound, in compliance with sound banking principles.

He lauded the new system as conducive to promotion of exports and cutting of the current deficit in the balance of payments.

The Central Bank governor, on the other hand, pointed out that the regulations announced today do not mean that there will be any change in the monetary laws now in effect.

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CSO: 4500/101

ECONOMY MINISTER ON EXCHANGE RATE POLICY

NC111443 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1246 GMT 11 May 87

[Statement to news conference by Dr Yusri Mustafa, minister of economy and foreign trade, at the Cabinet office in Cairo on 11 May--recorded]

[Text] I am pleased to announce the opening of the free market of foreign exchange in Egyptian banks effective today. As you know, the current system in Egypt is one of multiple exchange rates, which has impaired the efficacy of monetary and financial policies and affected the viability of economic policies. A large and growing number of transactions has been financed outside the banking system.

The relationship between the Egyptian pound and foreign currencies has not been determined exclusively by the market forces of supply and demand. Other abnormal factors have affected the going exchange rate: speculation, middlemen's profits, and lack of accurate data and proper organization. All this has led to sporadic reductions in the value of the Egyptian pound. Foreign currencies, particularly the dollar, have also been in demand as a hedge against depreciation. Foreign exchange revenues, scarce as they are, have also been used in part to finance imports incompatible with development considerations. One of the reasons for these phenomena was dealings taking place outside the regular banking system.

To deal with this situation, the government has decided to implement a number of policies based on the following principles:

1. Measures to strengthen Egyptian pound, a symbol of national sovereignty, will be taken. The Egyptian pound's parity with the dollar will be set to reflect the true value of the Egyptian pound. Inflation will be curbed so as to discourage the hoarding of dollars;
2. A single exchange rate will gradually replace the current multiple rates. This necessitates the formulation of a short-term exchange rate policy to implement the specific measures to be taken. Such a policy should guarantee that enough time is allowed for the economy to adjust to the new exchange rate;

3. The exchange rate policy should be consistent with other development policies so as to eliminate, as soon as possible, structural imbalances in the Egyptian economy;
4. Welfare policies will not be overlooked. Basic consumer goods will continue to be subsidized through the continued existence, for the time being, of the Central Bank group;
5. Banks, which are safe and well-organized financial channels, should play a greater role in the transfer of foreign currency deposits by people inside and outside the country;
6. Stability in the foreign exchange market should be strengthened by encouraging dealers in foreign currencies to use the banking system. This can be achieved by adopting a reasonable exchange rate and improving banking services;
7. Finally, foreign deposits by people residing inside and outside the country should be protected from all risks.

So that these policies may be implemented, three decrees have been issued to organize the new foreign exchange market in Egypt. These are Decrees No. 222, 223, and 224 of 1987.

The new foreign exchange system will allow state-approved banks operating in Egypt to buy and sell foreign exchange. The foreign exchange market will be supervised by a committee selected by these banks without interference from any other authority. This committee will set exchange rates on a daily basis and in a practical manner, taking into account market forces and other indicators.

Arrangements for the operation of this market, such as provision of a physical location and all modern equipment needed, have been made. Also, data has been collected about market conditions and past behavior.

I would like to conclude by summing up the new system:

1. The decrees which have been issued mark the start of a full-fledged foreign exchange market in which the exchange rate of the Egyptian pound will be determined by the free play of supply and demand. This task will be accomplished within a medium-term period and with due awareness of structural considerations.
2. Monetary regulations now in force will remain valid until they are amended as the banking system moves to increase its revenues of foreign exchange. The changes will be paced so that banks can cope with the changing conditions while responding gradually to the demand on foreign exchange for such invisible outlays as tourism and medical treatment abroad.

3. I would like to underscore the government's confidence in the capability of the highly efficient banking system to perform its new tasks.

This new experiment will succeed if, in addition to increased efforts by the banks, citizens inside and outside the country gain better awareness of the new functions of the banking system and if businessmen understand the need to undertake their transactions through this system in order to eliminate speculation of the Egyptian pound, reduce the concomittant waste of resources, and draw the full benefits of the new foreign exchange market.

Finally, I would like to stress that the new system is just one more step in the government's efforts to boost exports and reduce the balance of payments deficit, a structural imbalance we are trying to eliminate.

/9738

CSO: 4500/101

MENA NOTES IMPORTANCE OF NEW EXCHANGE POLICIES

NC111720 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 11 May 87

[Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)--The economic decisions announced today are the first step toward unifying foreign currency exchange rates, a process which will be completed within 18 months.

The first step allows the banking system and its units to buy foreign currencies at realistic prices, without questioning the sellers about their source. This is an important step, because it will eliminate the role of middlemen, played previously by black market traders, between those who have these currencies and the importers who needed them to finance their own imports and open credit.

This system will also enable all banks operating in Egypt to deal seriously with banks in Arab countries. The Egyptian working abroad can go to his bank to transfer his foreign currency savings to any bank he chooses in Egypt. Thus, Egypt guarantees the transfer of a large share of these Egyptians' savings through legal channels: the banking system.

The economic decisions will prevent random speculation by free market merchants against the dollar and other currencies, which was damaging Egypt's economy. The last of these speculations took place in March, when the dollar rate in the free market rose from 195 piastres to 230 piastres, without any economic justification.

When the new system succeeds in attracting a major portion of foreign currencies from various sources, such as the savings of Egyptians working abroad, tourism, or the remittance of companies' profits, it will control the foreign currencies' rates in accordance with the interests of the national economy and without damaging the interests of those dealing with it. It will also use these savings to finance imports and open credits needed by the public and private sectors companies.

Many bank chairmen have expressed optimism about the success of this new system, considered an important turning point in the Egyptian economy and a step in the right direction to rectify the imbalances present in some aspects of this economy.

/9738

CSO: 4500/101

CABINET DISCUSSES 1987-88 BUDGET OBJECTIVES

NC171049 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 May 87

[Text] At a session that ended early today, the Cabinet discussed the public budget for financial year 1987-88. Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has reported. He said that the session was chaired by Prime Minister dr 'Atif Sidqi, who stressed that the budget plan is designed to tackle the issue of the budget deficit, as this is one cause of inflation. It also aims at controlling prices, providing what is needed to operate investment and productive projects, raising the standard of services, and satisfying national security requirements. The prime minister also stressed that the government's policy is directed at achieving economic and fiscal réforms through medium- and long-term plans.

The information minister added that Finance Minister Dr Muhammad al-Razzaz briefed the Cabinet on the budget's primary objectives, which are: controlling the budget deficit, developing the state's nontraditional resources without imposing burdens on the citizens, maintaining periodic and incentive allowances for workers, and employing graduates. Another main objective of the budget is to maintain the subsidy allocations and burdens shouldered by the state, such as differences in the rates of exchange on loans and soft loans that benefit development projects. The budget also commits funds for salaries and allocations needed to operate new projects. It will also rationalize and control expenditures as much as possible and endeavor to achieve the utmost benefit from available resources and production stocks. It will work to develop and activate the state's income system.

The information minsiter concluded by saying that the Cabinet will continue debating the public budget at a session next week.

/9738

CSO: 4500/101

SECURITY IN EGYPT REQUIRES RESTRAINT BY AUTHORITIES

PM141437 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 8 May 87 p 1

[Mustafa Shardi article: "Self-control Is a Security Requirement"]

[Text] I said yesterday that we reject the principle of dialogue through bullets and that any justification for the incident in which Abu Basha [former interior minister] was fired at are also rejected. Egypt has a watchful and honorable judiciary and heaven has a sleepless eye. When someone grants himself power on earth and heavenly rights, mankind will suffer a gross disturbance. I have also said that the authorities are required to exercise self-control and face what is happening calmly and without emotion. It would not benefit Egypt if the authorities were to respond to this incident with violence that might aggravate the situation further. Those who are uttering cries of revenge must keep silent and those who are sharpening their weapons and preparing prisons must fear God with regard to Egypt and its security.

Today I add that we are facing a fundamental fact that cannot be ignored, namely that we do not know who carried out this attack. It is not everyone from the Islamic groups who grows a beard; furthermore, there are countless numbers of these groups in Egypt. Through a telephone call to AL-WAFD a few hours after the incident, those calling themselves "the Islamic Group" claimed responsibility for the attack. I personally have not heard of such a group before; in fact many similar contacts tend to take place in most of the world's capitals which witness assassination attempts against politicians.

We are also facing another fact: this operation could have been carried out by unbearded people. So why were the perpetrators eager to let the eyewitnesses see their abnormally long beards? Indeed why did not one of the perpetrators insist on frequently going with his noticeable beard to the street where the former interior minister lives and in a manner that prompted the eyewitnesses to keep their eyes on him for several days before the incident?

I do not accuse anyone and I do not defend anyone, either. I am trying to take the side of Egypt so that a fire, which we may be unable to contain, will not be kindled. Israel could order its agents to commit such a crime in order to kindle a fire in Egypt in which security and stability would be

what was burned. I too do not at all believe that Israel wants security and stability for Egypt. Libya could also push its agents to carry out such an operation and achieve the same sinful objectives. The same accusation could be applied to many other quarters.

All these factors prompt the authorities to adhere to self-control and realize the fact that any violence leads only to more violence. Stability in Egypt was undermined because of the bullets fired at Abu Basha but similar incidents also occur in London, Paris, Rome, Madrid, and other capitals; they truly undermine stability. The important thing is that the government should know how to keep these incidents in proportion and how to restore balance immediately to the unstable security. As for what really threatens stability, doubles security instability, and guarantees the atmosphere for them to continue is an unwise response by the authorities, namely arresting thousands of innocent people in search of one or even ten perpetrators. This is exactly what we should avoid while searching for the perpetrators who tried to assassinate Husan Abu Basha.

/9738

CSO: 4500/101

CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL CHAIRMAN INTERVIEWED

PM081513 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 8 May 87 pp 29, 30

[Interview with Dr 'Ali Lutfi, chairman of Egyptian Consultative Council by 'Usamah 'Ajja in Cairo; dated not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-HAWADITH] The opposition expects the Consultative Council to be dissolved in the near future. Is there any truth in this news?

[Lutfi] I would like to mention some facts: President Mubarak put the question of the dissolution of the People's Assembly to a referendum because it was politically convenient after the amendment of the assembly law to allow independents to run for office, the cancellation of seats allocated for women, and other amendments envisaged in this law. In addition the High Constitutional Court is still investigating a suit contesting the constitutionality of Consultative Council Law No 120 of 1980. This is why some of them [the opposition] expect the Consultative Council to be dissolved. As long as the matter is before the court, because this is for the court to assess in the light of the facts contained in the suit presented to it, the court alone will apply the law to these facts. The third point concerns the need to amend the Consultative Council law so that its rules are in line with the amendment of the People's Assembly law. Whether or not the amendment requires the council to be dissolved is left to the assessment of the political leadership. The Consultative Council law has not been amended and its unconstitutionality has not been decided by the court. Therefore, there is no need for the Consultative Council to be dissolved.

[AD-HAWADITH] Do you believe there is any intention to change the Consultative Council's powers and force it to be a parliamentary council with extra powers in order to get out of its framework as a council for non-binding studies? And how can this be achieved?

[Lutfi] The Consultative Council is a parliamentary council participating in legislation on an established basis:

First, the rules of Articles 194 and 195 of the Egyptian Constitution.

Second, the council's power in dealing with national politics and issues, examples of which are:

1. Proposals relating to the amendment of one article or more of the constitution.
2. Drafts of the general plan for economic and social development.
3. Reconciliation and alliance treaties as well as all treaties that alter the state's territories or relate to the right of sovereignty.
4. Drafts of the laws referred to the council by the president of the republic. And also matters relating to the country's general policy or its policy regarding Arab and foreign affairs.
5. Studying and proposing what the council finds capable of preserving in the 23 July 1952 and the 15 May 1971 revolutions; consolidating national unity and social security. So the Consultative Council actually exercises legislative powers, but it has no jurisdiction with regard to control over government actions. To grant the council legislative, control powers would deepen the exercise of democracy in Egypt since the council includes excellent members who are specialized in various fields. In addition to this the Consultative Council's experience in the light of its limited powers shows a distinguished performance that encourages the idea of changing it into a second chamber with powers to control government actions and legislation.

[AL-HAWADITH] It is know that the chairman of the Consultative Council is also in charge of the Committee for Egyptian Party Affairs. So what is your assessment of party experience in Egypt, both positive and negative, over the past 11 years?

[Lutfi] The party exercise in Egypt is strengthening day by day, and this is basically attributable to the fact that the regime in Egypt is convincingly committed to democracy, which has become the source of constitutional legitimacy. I can say that party experience over the past 11 years has created a basis for a fundamental aspect of democratic action, namely the multiplicity of parties, which means more legitimacy for the opposition accompanied by freedom of expression in opposition papers and other legitimate channels of expression. The negative side of the party experience is represented by the fact that the opposition sometimes acts in an unobjective manner to express its opposition, but despite some excesses, its presence undoubtedly enriches the democratic experience and refreshes the political system with many new views and effective actions. I see that the stronger the opposition's foothold becomes, the more its objectivity and force increase in advancing other opinions which would help in policymaking and in uniting the masses with consciousness and hard work in order to resolve the issues and challenges that have been raised. Therefore I am optimistic about the future of democracy in Egypt because the foundation has already been laid, and what is happening now is that we are building on that foundation.

[AL-HAWADITH] Why does the Party Affairs Committee oppose the idea of other political trends which already exist on the political scene securing legitimacy

for their existence, especially the Nasirites and Muslim Brotherhood. Do you believe the present parties can accommodate all political trends in the Egyptian political scene?

[Lutfi] The party law does not obstruct the formation of new parties. In fact Article 1 of this law stipulates that the formation of parties is a right for Egyptians and that every Egyptian has the right to affiliate himself with a political party. The important thing is that the formation of a new party must fulfill certain conditions: The party should not violate the principles of Islamic Shari'ah, which is the principal source of legislation, and the principles of the 23 July 1952 and the 15 May 1971 revolutions. The party should also preserve national unity, social security, the socio-democratic system, and socialist gains. I believe that there is collective and mass agreement on these conditions. There is also one important condition: The new party's program should be different from those of the existing parties, which is, in my view, logical. The law also gives those who want to form a party the right to contest the decision of the Party Affairs Committee if their application is rejected. The High Administrative Court has the authority to make the final decision regarding this appeal. So how can the Party Affairs Committee obstruct the formation or emergence of new parties? Let me say frankly: Democracy is affected not by the number of parties but by the extent of the parties' influence over the masses. For instance, the United States, the foremost Western democracy, has only two big parties, the Republican and Democratic Parties, and other parties are marginal and ineffective in political life. This does not mean that I am against the formation of new parties. The door is open to them, but all that I am asking is that political and mass seriousness be visible in the plans of new parties.

[AL-HAWADITH] The Consultative Council recently discussed a report on Red Sea security. What is your view on this issue and what methods can be used to secure a kind of cooperation among the Red Sea states in order to keep it away from the control and influence of the big powers?

[Lutfi] The importance of the report on keeping the Red Sea out of the international struggle aimed at controlling zones of influence and strategic waterways is in fact attributable to the Red Sea's geographical position and its control over one of the main world trade routes, especially with regard to oil and raw materials. The Red Sea also links the North and the South of the globe. Therefore the powers interested in it compete and indeed struggle in order to secure strategies that are in line with their objectives. The concept of the Egyptian national and Arab security of the Red Sea emanates from this fact and includes all efforts and measures taken by the Arab states to achieve their security and safeguard their independence, freedom, and sovereignty within the international community without any foreign interference or pressure. The strategy of the Red Sea states is summed up in the need to work toward achieving security and stability in the region, protecting the region from international conflicts and schemes, guaranteeing the rights of these states, enhancing joint Arab cooperation in order to thwart any aggressive schemes, and stressing the right to restrict navigation for hostile ships which constitute a danger of a threat to the region's security. To

achieve this it is necessary to secure a kind of political and military planning within the framework of cooperation among Arab states and the OAU as well as a coordination of the possible military efforts within the framework of a unified regional strategy. I believe that cooperation in exploiting the resources of the Red Sea and executing joint food and agricultural projects can constitute a beginning for future cooperation among the Red Sea states.

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CSO: 4500/94

'ARAFAT IDEA FOR PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI STATE ATTACKED

NC100705 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2220 GMT 9 May 87

[Text] Cairo, 9 May (MENA)--The newspaper AL-AHRAM has expressed its surprise at PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's circulation of the notion of establishing a joint Palestinian-Israeli state at a time when he discarded, "or at least so it seems," the idea of establishing a joint Palestinian-Jordanian state.

In its Sunday editorial, AL-AHRAM notes that the main objection to the Amman Agreement at the PNC conference was that it calls for the establishment of a confederal state before the inception of a Palestinian state. The agreement to establish a confederal union, "according to the concept proposed in Algiers," was premature because a Palestinian state should be established first, after which it would voluntarily decide to unite with Jordan. In this respect, the paper points out, a Palestinian state within such a framework would only be established on the West Bank and Gaza. The paper emphasizes that 'Arafat's insinuations that he would accept a Palestinian-Israeli state on the West Bank, in Gaza, and in Israel proper, without demanding that an independent Palestinian state be established first, is surprising. With this proposal, the paper maintains, 'Arafat wants to go back to the time before Israel was established. He wants to begin anew on the entire original area of Palestine with a state that would include both the Arabs and Jews. The paper notes that this very naive proposal has been met with great condemnation because it immediately removes the current situation back 40 years.

At the same time, the paper states, 'Arafat's threats to intensify attacks against the State of Israel and the Israeli people render his proposal not only a disapproved one, but also ridiculous, as it suggests that the Palestinians still intend to make their way by spilling blood. Concluding its editorial, AL-AHRAM expresses its deep regret that a major leader would stoop in his statements to such a point where he not only loses credibility, but also seems in total contradiction with himself, a stance, unfortunately, which other Palestinian leaders share with him.

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CSO: 4500/94

REPORT ON TANTA PRISON RIOTS

JN221137 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 20 May 87 p 7

[By 'Abd-al-'Aziz Hilali and Majdi 'Abd al-Ghani]

[Text] Drug trafficking convicts in Tanta Prison tried to incite a riot inside the prison building and set it ablaze after guards prevented one of their fellow inmates from bringing in narcotics. They also tried to prevent firemen from dousing the fire, and threw stones at the firemen and prison guards resulting in several injuries. AL-AKHBAR has learned that Major General Zaki Badr, interior minister, has decided to transfer 113 hard case convicts from Tanta Prison to other locations. Another 85 high security risk inmates are to be moved to other prisons. Tanta Prison was the scene of a riot carried out by a number of prisoners which left a number of the prison officers, guards, and prisoners injured.

It was learned from initial investigations by Tanta's prosecutor's office that the disturbances began when policemen caught an inmate returning from a court hearing with contraband to smuggle into the prison. The man became abusive and was later joined by fellow inmates who set fire to clothing and prison equipment. Prison officers tried to contain the situation but the prisoners pelted firefighters with stones when they tried to extinguish the blaze.

Central security men under Major General 'Abd-al-Latif al-Dib, and security forces under Major General Tawfiq al-Minshawi, Al-Gharbiyyah Province assistant security officer, and Brigadier General 'Adil al-Harnil, Tanta's chief constable, intervened. The prison was under a five hour siege before the situation was brought under control and the unrest quelled.

Two police officers and four central security members were injured. Two prisoners were killed and six, all convicted on murder and theft charges, were injured. They were transferred to the Tanta Hospital for treatment.

Major General Muhammad Raja'i Ahmad, assistant interior minister and head of prison services, has issued a detention order against the Tanta Prison warden and three guards to investigate their failure to quell the riot by force. The Tanta prosecutor's office has ordered that 35 prisoners who instigated the riot be put on trial.

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CSO: 4500/103

MUBARAK CHAIRS MEETING ON DOMESTIC, FOREIGN ISSUES

NC231439 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 23 May 87

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak held an expanded meeting at the Presidency in Heliopolis this morning. Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi, deputy prime minister, ministers, and Dr Usamah al-Baaz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs, attended the meeting.

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif disclosed that President Mubarak convened the meeting as part of his follow-up of important domestic and foreign issues. He revealed that during the meeting, Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi outlined the cabinet approved financial policies pertaining to the 1987-1988 state budget. Al-Sharif further noted that President Mubarak stressed the importance of the state budget remaining committed to basic expenditures such as salaries, step increases, and wage incentives, in addition to maintaining the current subsidy on basic commodities, and providing sufficient funds for implementing new projects and developing and improving services.

President Mubarak also assessed the implementation of the resolution pertaining to the establishment of a Free Foreign Currency Exchange and the measures adopted to ensure its success. The prime minister stressed that the results have been positive and that the volume of transactions at the exchange totalled \$14 million by last Thursday [21 May].

The latest position vis-a-vis the IMF, and the talks to reschedule Egyptian debts which ended in Paris yesterday, also were discussed at the meeting.

Safwat al-Sharif reported that President Mubarak listened to a report on education, and the research carried out by the Education Ministry to develop education policy.

With regard to foreign issues, President Mubarak discussed Middle East developments, and the preparations and ongoing contacts with both superpowers and other parties in connection with convening an international peace conference. He also reviewed the obstacles to the peace process and the changes affecting the Lebanese scene in light of the abrogation of the 1969 Cairo Agreement and the effect this might have on protecting the Palestinian camps in the future.

EX-INTERIOR MINISTER ABU-BASHA INTERVIEWED

PM210925 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 12 May 87 pp 1, 10

[Report on an interview with Major General Hasan Abu-Basha, former Egyptian interior minister, by AL-WAFD Chief Editor Mustafa Shardi in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] Hasan Abu-Basha talked to Mustafa Shardi, AL-WAFD's chief editor, and recalled the terrifying moments of the assassination attempt against him. Abu-Basha said that the perpetrator fired at him with complete deliberation and that it is a miracle he remained alive, thanks to God's will. Abu Basha confirmed that the bullets used in the assassination attempt were of a special type internationally banned because they enter the body and then explode, tearing the tissue severely around the area of the explosion, but do not create an exit hole as in the case of ordinary bullets. Abu Basha said that he has heard that this kind of bullet is available in Lebanon.

Abu-Basha confirmed to AL-WAFD's chief editor that he does not want anyone to be victimized because of him, and that his principle has always been: Rather 10 guilty people escape to spare the oppression of one innocent person. He also stressed his adherence to his opinion regarding the method of dealing with the Islamic groups in Egypt and the extremist Islamic trend in general, namely that violence leads to more violence, that repressive methods will achieve nothing, and that prisons will not change an idea but that in fact one idea should be confronted with another idea, one opinion with another opinion, one argument with another argument.

Abu-Basha said that the assassination attempt strengthened his adherence to this opinion and that only a frank and free dialogue can save Egypt from this sedition between the two elements of the nation and that the required dialogue should not just take place between members of the Islamic groups and religious scholars but must include writers, thinkers, and publicists so as to be a dialogue between the youth of these groups and the whole of the society, not with a view to weakening these youths' belief in their religion but in fact to purify many of their beliefs of the numerous blemishes which the true religion does not approve of and which contradict the magnanimity of Islam.

Abu-Basha swore that he has never ordered the torture of anyone. He added: This does not mean that some excesses did not take place during arrest and detention operations, or inside prisons between the prisoner and the jailer.

But the responsibility for these incidents is confined to a narrow circle which does not exceed a few young officers. The public prosecutor's investigations have proved that many of the torture reports were in fact untrue and that many of the injuries were self-inflicted by the prisoners themselves to prove torture had taken place.

I noticed that during the whole interview Major General Hasan Abu-Basha had been eager to stress the need to initiate a dialogue with the Islamic groups and put an immediate halt to the methods of repression and confrontation. He said that he had to arrest a large number of Islamic group members following the assassination of the late President Anwar al-Sadat after he became convinced that there was a large-scale plan to attempt further assassinations and that he could not leave Egypt exposed to further security shocks which undermine stability and, consequently, affect development. But after a very short period he began a dialogue inside the prisons and later released the detainees so that this dialogue could continue outside.

I left Major General Hasan Abu-Basha's room asking myself: Is there someone in this country who will listen to this opinion and deal with the Islamic groups without violence. It is one man's opinion of how to deal with those who attempted to assassinate him, an opinion which emanates from feelings that his homeland's security comes before his own life. Is there someone who will listen?

/12913

CSO: 4500/103

AL-JUMHURIYAH COLUMNIST SAYS ISRAELI TOURISTS 'SPIES'

JN261315 Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 23 Apr 87 p 5

["A Word of Love" Column by Muhammad al-Hayawan]

[Text] A strange and interesting phenomenon that is also a cause of concern is taking place. The Israeli tourist groups have made a habit of entering stores, inquiring about types and prices of commodities, and asking questions about homemade materials and imported ones without buying anything even if it were to cost them only a penny. They are conducting surveys and studies. The Israelis are doing this at supermarkets, pharmacies, butcher shops, and handicraft stores. They are doing it in a strangely insistent manner that bothers people because they do not buy anything. They also overcrowd the stores, thus making the process of buying difficult for customers. It also bothers people because they are Israelis and people do not want to deal with them, and because storekeepers want to get rid of them while angrily exercising self-restraint. Storekeepers have complained about these disagreeable people because they do not know what to do about them.

The Israeli tourists come in groups, ride the same buses, and stay at the same hotel, which cater for all of their living needs and requirements. The Israeli, by nature, is a miserly person who neither buys anything nor spends even a penny. The money he earns is kept in a locked safe and is not allowed to be recirculated. Hence, they are tourists who bring in no revenue or benefit for Egypt. They are merely conducting surveys, studies, and research, and to be frank, espionage activities. They stay at small cheap hotels that have become well-known to Egyptians; therefore, Egyptians have chosen to avoid these hotels. Egyptians deliberately avoid using them because they do not want to be subjected to the insistent inquiries of Israeli tourists.

Dealing with Israel only results in losses. The newspapers have recently published reports about an Egyptian who made deals with an Israeli. This Egyptian became the victim of a fraud operation that cost him \$300,000, probably his life savings. This is the result of dealing with Israel. Some of the few Egyptians who went to Israel were either killed or committed suicide, and there are suicide or murder cases involving Egyptians who went to Israel without realizing the dangers involved.

We have warned that Israeli tourists do not come to Egypt for purely touristic purposes; rather they come to spy against Egypt. Praise be the Lord, the Egyptians by nature hate to speak with Israeli tourists. Sometimes a foreigner stops and imposes himself on an Egyptian and shakes hands with him, but once the Egyptian realizes that his foreigner is Israeli, he withdraws his hand, terminating the conversation. This behavior reflects the nature of the Egyptians who realize that the Camp David accords are no more than a means to end the state of war.

/12858

CSO: 4500/98

MONTE CARLO ON REACTION

JN251843 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1730 GMT 25 Apr 87

[Huda Tawfiq dispatch from Cairo]

[Text] Official sources here told me that instructions were actually issued to the official Egyptian delegation to the PNC to withdraw and return to Cairo immediately. Extreme displeasure is rife in official and popular Egyptian circles with regard to PNC discussions that criticized Egypt and its role, which Cairo regarded as interference in its affairs.

The sources I spoke to warned that Cairo's reaction will be strong and serious regarding Egypt's ties with the PLO. The sources said: We will not accept or remain silent on any recommendations by the PNC which harm Egypt or try to differentiate between the people and their leadership.

An informed source told me: If Egypt remained silent on certain past resolutions, the situation now is different. The PLO leadership and organizations should have gotten over that stage, given the serious international efforts and Egyptian endeavors to solve the Palestinian problem. The source also told me: The seriousness of the current stage should have prompted the PLO to streamline its contacts not only with Egypt but with all the Arab states. The source warned that if the PLO wants to return to the language of the past, it would be easy for Egypt to deal with the situation by taking certain stands and definite measures.

The general feeling in Cairo is that PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat might have gained from the tactical standpoint but that the risks might be very great.

On the official level, the political leadership declined to comment on the PNC deliberations with regard to Egypt. Ambassador Taha al-Farnawany, the head of the Egyptian delegation, is expected to return to Cairo tomorrow and submit his report on the PNC discussions and his meeting with 'Arafat to Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister.

A senior official told me that the attacks on Egypt and its policies are the main reason for the Egyptian delegation's withdrawal. The official asked: In whose interest are the Palestinian factions wronging Egypt and in whose interest are they changing the course of Egyptian-Palestinian amity?

He described what took place at the PNC as a deviation from all the courses that would strengthen Egyptian-Palestinian relations. He said: The PLO should have appreciated the dire consequences of what happened, but there are other elements that are trying to spoil Egyptian-Palestinian relations.

/12858

CSO: 4500/98

BRIEFS

FOREIGN CURRENCY DEALERS ARRESTED—Police arrested 120 major foreign currency dealers known for their big operations in foreign exchange, as a precaution to prevent manipulation of rates of exchange and the creation of a black market, reports AL-AHRAM in its second-lead story. Interior Minister Zaki Badr gave orders for efforts to be intensified for arresting whoever takes in foreign currencies or deals with them outside the banks as a guarantee for the success of the new system of restricting foreign exchange dealings to banks, the paper says. AKHBAR AL-YAWM says very important measures are currently being considered against currency dealers determined to go on engaging in speculation on foreign exchange, and quotes an economic source as saying that any scheme that is carried out by these speculators will be dealt with harsh firmness. [Text] [Cairo MENA in English 0845 GMT 23 May 87 NC] /12913

MUBARAK ON PEACE CONFERENCE—President Husni Mubarak has declared that Egypt is making strenuous efforts to ensure that an international conference is held on peace in the Middle East. He also stressed that Egypt has not abandoned its support for the Palestinian people's cause, nor will it do so. Speaking at an expanded meeting held last night at NDP headquarters, which lasted until the early hours of this morning, President Mubarak underlined the soundness of the course of the national economy and Egypt's policy of economic reform. He declared that Egypt is taking big strides along the path of development and that democracy, which it has espoused and to which it is committed, illuminates the landmarks along this path. President Mubarak added that the interests of Egyptian national security are above all party considerations and that every Egyptian must preserve the homeland's safety and confront whatever adversely affects its stability. [Text] [Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0900 GMT 24 May 87 NC] /12913

OIL RESERVE INCREASE—Cairo, 24 May (MENA)—Egyptian Petroleum Minister 'Abd al-Hadi Qandil has affirmed that Egypt's crude oil reserves have reached 4.2 billion barrels; that is, double what they were at the beginning of the first 5-Year Plan, which ends this year. He said that Egypt is trying to do two things: increase and maintain its reserves as long as possible, and sell its crude oil at good prices. In an interview to be published in Monday's edition of the newspaper MAYU, the mouthpiece of the NDP, Qandil said that Egypt had signed 15 new oil prospecting agreements with international companies, as well as making 19 new oil discoveries, including 5 in the Gulf of Suez and 12 in the Western Desert. These are the most important discoveries we made last year, he added. The petroleum minister said that Egypt had made the first big

commercial crude oil discovery in the Mediterranean, and had discovered large amounts of natural gas as well. Natural gas production reached 5.2 million tons last year, compared to an annual rate of 1.9 million tons at the beginning of the 5-Year Plan. He said that Egypt used to import 600,000 tons of natural gas annually before the start of the 5-Year Plan, whereas this year it will import only 30,000 tons. [Excerpt] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 2215 GMT 24 May 87 NC] /12913

NEW OFFSHORE OIL FIND--Abu Rudays, 20 May (MENA)--'Abd-al-Hadi Qandil, minister of petroleum and natural resources, has announced the discovery of oil in the Ra's Jarah area in the Gulf of Suez, south of the town of al-Tur. During an inspection tour of a number of oil projects in the Gulf of Suez, Qandil said the new Sinai I oil field will have an initial production capacity of 10,000 barrels per day. Tests on the first and second wells drilled so far indicate a reserve of 20 million barrels. Qandil noted the new find promises to be a fruitful one as the oil was discovered in a stratum unexploited before in the Gulf of Suez. He explained that work is underway to develop this oil field, which produces good quality oil of a density of 34 degrees. [Excerpt] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 0942 GMT 20 May 87 NC] /12913

OIL PRODUCTION, VALUE--The oil sector's balance of payments has shown a surplus of 433 pounds between July 1986 and March 1987. The value of produced oil during this period was 637 million pounds and the imports 194 million pounds. Egypt's oil production during this period totalled 31,588,000 tonnes of crude and 4.29 million tonnes of gas and oil byproducts. This was included in a report the oil authority submitted to oil minister 'Abd-al-Hadi Qandil yesterday. [All figures as published] [Text] [Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 9 May 87 p 1 JN] /12858

PROTOCOL WITH MADAGASCAR--Cairo, 10 May (MENA)--Egypt and Madagascar today signed an information protocol providing for the exchange of publications, information leaflets, and radio and television programs to promote understanding between their peoples. Egypt will also extend scholarships and training grants to Malagasy nationals in various information spheres. [Summary] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1136 GMT 10 May 87 NC] /12858

JAPANESE GRANTS--Cairo, 26 April (MENA)--Three letters of agreement were signed today by Umaymah 'Abd-al-'Aziz, first under secretary at the Egyptian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, and the Japanese charge d'affaires in Cairo. According to these agreements, Japan will provide Egypt with three grants totalling \$7,580,000 to finance a number of projects in the fields of construction, supply, and health. [Summary] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1535 GMT 26 Apr 87 NC] /12858

PARTY DEPUTY LEADER DIES--Cairo, 12 May (MENA)--Dr Wahid Ra'fat, deputy leader of the Neo-Wafd Party, died in Cairo at dawn today, at the age of 81. [Excerpt] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 12 May 87 NC] /12858

NEW YUGOSLAV PRESIDENT--Cairo, 17 May (MENA)--President Husni Mubarak has sent the following cable of congratulations to Yugoslav President Lazar Mojsov on the occasion of his assumption of the presidency: I am happy to send your excellency sincere, hearty congratulations on your assumption of the presidency and to extend to you best wishes for success in serving your country. We are confident that the close friendship and cooperation between our friendly countries will develop further in all fields for our common benefit and will strengthen the movement of positive neutrality and nonalignment in establishing a world where people can enjoy security and peace. The president also sent a cable of congratulations to Hamdija Pozderac, the vice president of Yugoslavia, on his assumption of office. [Text] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 17 May 87 NC] /9738

MEMO RECEIVED, REPLY PLANNED--Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stated to AKHBAR AL-YAWM that Egypt has received the Israeli memorandum on Tabah and is studying it now and preparing a reply to be presented on 12 October. Israel will also reply to the Egyptian memorandum on the same date. Dr 'Abd-al-Majid also stressed the need to resume coordination between Jordan and the PLO to work for convening an international conference and for promoting peace initiatives. He added Egypt is giving a full picture of the situation to all parties, particularly the United States, the Soviet Union, and all concerned countries and Arab states, so there will be a unified stand by all countries to attain positive results paving the way for a comprehensive, lasting peace in the region. [Text] [Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 16 May 87 p 1 JN] /12913

LOAN AGREEMENT SIGNED--Cairo, 17 May (MENA)--An agreement was signed at the Ministry of Planning today between the Egyptian and Italian Governments, by which Italy will grant Egypt a \$150 million loan. The loan will be repaid over a period of 20 years, including a grace period of 10 years, and carries a small interest rate, 1.5 percent annually. The agreement was signed for the Egyptian side by Dr Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and international cooperation, and for the Italian side by Giovanni Migliuolo, the Italian ambassador to Cairo. [Excerpt] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1245 GMT 17 May 87 NC] /12913

AL-SHADHILI DENIED PASSPORT--Cairo, 17 May (MENA)--The Higher Administrative court ruled yesterday that retired Lieutenant General Sa'd al-Shadhili [former Army chief of staff living in exile] is not entitled to have his passport renewed or to acquire a new passport. The court rescinded the verdict issued in his favor in this regard asserting it contradicts the provisions of the law. AL-AHRAM says today that the Administrative Judicial Court had opined that General al-Shadhili should be allowed to obtain a passport because a long time had passed since he was charged with certain actions that no longer have any consequences. However, the state's cases panel contested the verdict before the Higher Administrative Court which issued the aforementioned ruling. [Text] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 0730 GMT 18 May 87 NC] /12913

ENERGY COOPERATION PROTOCOL SIGNED--Cairo, 18 May (MENA)--Egypt and Spain signed a protocol on technical cooperation in the electrical and nontraditional energy fields at the Ministry of Electricity today. It was signed on behalf of Egypt by Electricity and Energy Minister Eng Mahir Abazah

and on behalf of Spain by Industry and Energy Minister Luis Carlos Crossier. Following the signing ceremony, engineer Abazah said three working teams of experts from both countries will be formed on the basis of the protocol. The first team will discuss cooperation in the field of electricity, particularly operations involving generation, transport, distribution, and grid control. The second group will focus on nontraditional energy, particularly the use of solar and wind energy, and will undertake studies in that field. Detailed plans will be drawn up by the third team for cooperation in the field of electricity generation, nuclear energy, and the local production of equipment for those plants. [Excerpts] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1340 GMT 18 May 87 NC] /12913

OFFICIAL DEPARTS FOR USSR--Cairo, 19 May (MENA)--Dr Kamal Abu-al-Khayr, dean of the Cooperative Studies Institute, left here early this morning for Moscow on a ten-day visit to the Soviet Union. In a pre-departure statement, Dr Abu-al-Khayr said that he will take part in the conference co-organized by the United Nations and the Soviet General Federation of Cooperatives due to be held there later today and run for five days. He added that he will present to the conference a special working paper on the role of the Middle East and North Africa to develop cooperatives in the area. He said that he will proceed later to the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan for a five-day visit during which he will get acquainted with the cooperative experience there, with the aim of benefiting from the Soviet expertise in this respect. [Text] [Cairo MENA in English 0753 GMT 19 May 87 NC] /12913

MINISTER VISITS BRITAIN, FRANCE--Cairo, 17 May (MENA)--Negineer Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport, communications, and maritime transport, left Cairo for London this morning, beginning a visit to Britain and France. In a predeparture statement, the minister said that during his 1-week tour he will meet with British and French officials to discuss technical cooperation in the transport, communications, railroad, and telephone fields. [Text] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 0745 GMT 17 May 87 NC] /9738

FRANCE SUPPORTS IMF NEGOTIATIONS--Paris, 15 May (MENA)--France has reiterated its support for Egypt in its talks with the IMF and Western creditor countries to reschedule its debts on the best possible terms. In a statement to a MENA correspondent in Paris, the French Foreign Ministry's official spokesman has said that when a friendly country such as Egypt faces financial difficulties, it is natural for France to do all it can, within the limits of its resources, to help. The spokesman noted in this respect his country's role in various fields of bilateral cooperation with Egypt. He also hailed the long-standing, very close relations between France and Egypt and the French people's affection for the Egyptian people and leaders. Regarding Egyptian-French cooperation in the field of armament, the French spokesman said: Delays have occurred in some installment payments, but the French authorities are very aware that the Egyptian authorities are doing all they can to resolve this, which cannot affect the unique cooperation to which both countries are committed. [Text] [Cairo MENA in Arabic 1155 GMT 15 May 87 NC] /9738

CSO: 4500/101

SAC LEADER, FORMER LABOR MINISTER INTERVIEWED

Khartoum GUIDING STAR in English 14 May 87 p 3

[Text]

The Leader of the Sudan African Congress Dr. Walter Kuni-jock resigned his post as Minister of Labour and Social Security in the Government of Prime Minister Mr. Saddik el Mahdi due to political differences and policy decisions.

In an interview with the Guiding Star Newspaper in Khartoum contributor Nihal Bol Wen queried Dr. Kuni-jock on Human Rights in the Sudan.

Read below the excerpts of the interview:

The Guiding Star:

The Prime Minister Sayed Saddik el Mahdi had declared peace initiative to the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army, SPLA and showed his government's intentions to end the civil war in the Southern Sudan, what are your impressions on the peace initiative?

Dr. Kuni-jock: What appeared from the Prime Minister's statement on the 6th of April this year is a peace initiative between his government and not with the SPLA because the statement in general was with intentions to improve relations with Ethiopia and that if Ethiopia did not accept to negotiate with SPLA/SPIM, Sudan will not have peace.

I and the Sudan African Congress, SAC support any peace talks between the SPLA/SPIM and the Sudan Government

because we believe in peace for this great nation.

The peace initiative in my opinion is in anyway unbalanced and I will find out from Col Dr. John Garang myself.

The Guiding Star:

The Regional Conferences were proposed by the Council for the South to be held before the National Constitutional Conferences will SAC participate in these Regional Conferences?

Dr. Kuni-jock:

The Council for the South has no constitutional basis so it cannot speak about holding Constitutional or Regional Conferences. Its appointment was even unlawful. I mean here that the Council has no legitimate powers to tackle the problems of the Southern Sudan. What has the Council

said up to now about the massacre of the Dinkas in el Daein? Are the regional conferences more important than the lives of the people?

The Guiding Star:

What are your relations with the Ministry of Peace and Constitutional Affairs?

Dr. Kuniwok:

What peace? What peace principles? I know that the Ministry of Peace like any government institution has not been given clear directives to operate. The Ministry is waiting for the Prime Minister's peace.

The Guiding Star:

What are your comments to those who say that the Ministry of Peace is only for Arab Affairs?

Dr. Kuniwok:

I don't think so.

The Guiding Star:

The Prime Minister Sayed Saddik el Mahdi recently announced before the Constituent Assembly that the September Laws were to be replaced by new laws that will give the majority constitutional rights without preconditions, what are your views on these two laws?

Dr. Kuniwok:

My opinion about the two laws are different because anybody who proposes laws against others will face difficulties. I think Sudan can be built on constitutional arrangements that will be convenient to the citizens and provide freedom of the individual on social justice and equality. We want equality in cultures and all sources of humanity in general. In this case, anybody who brings sharia laws

or replace them with his own laws is not solving the problems of the Sudan.

We, in SAC demand separation of religion from government institutions, Religion should be a matter of concern between a person and the Almighty God and therefore September or November laws should have gone with the May regime.

We don't like Islamic laws. Sudan should be free from any particular religions laws.

Those who insist to keep September laws will not bring peace to the Sudan.

The Muslims who claim to be the majority are not living separately from the minority so how can each group have separate laws. We want secular laws for the Sudan.

The Guiding Star:

Citizens have been massacred right in the eyes of the government in El Daein, what are your comments on the Daein tragedy and elsewhere?

Dr. Kuniwok:

I think the government has failed to run this country. According to eyewitness the 3000 Dinkas massacred at ED daein claimed to be Dr. John Garang's people, how then are these citizens identified as Garang's people?

We will enquire from the government to investigate the massacres of Ed Daein and similar incidents in the Southern Sudan. The government will be charged for arming militia from the Arab tribes against innocent citizens who need government protection as well.

The Guiding Star:

There is said to be a Human Rights Organization in the Sudan, what can you say about this organ?

Dr. Kuniwok:

There is no Human Rights in the Sudan. If there is such an organization it must be of some people who want to cover crimes. I don't think there is human rights with the 'Kasha' going on daily in the National Capital and its suburbs, millions of people are dying everyday of hunger and war, where is that Human Rights Organization which does not carry out its sacred duties?

I think that Human Rights Organization in the Sudan must be on Arab one and not Sudanese

The Guiding Star:

The civil war in the Sudan is claimed as a war between the cross and crescent, Muslims and Christians Arabs and Africans, could you comment on this?

Dr. Kuniwok:

The word civil have something to do with civilized people so the claim is because some of the People who are carrying arms are more civilized at most cases. It is not a civil war as some people call it. To the best of my knowledge the war is between those who understand development and services.

I think that the people who are now fighting in the Sudan were divided by the Europeans who were hunting for slaves.

The Europeans classified these peoples into Arabs in the Northern Sudan and Africans in the South. These people were educated on religious bases that is Islamic north and Christian south and became the foundation of the present conflict.

The two entities were isolated from one another. Ignorance and backwardness became dominant in the South and the Northerners were encouraged and engaged in slave trade for the Europeans.

In 1955 before the Sudan's independence the two groups came up with ideas about the distribution of national wealth and the system of rule in the Sudan. On a deadlock a war broke between the North and the South and lasted 17 years.

The Guiding Star:

Sometimes, people refer to you as SPLA/SPLM representative in Khartoum, what do you say in this?

Dr. Kuniwok:

If you know those who call me SPLA/SPLM representative take me to them. I will sue them to the court of law because their assertion is groundless.

The Guiding Star:

Your party SAC has proposed in its constitution that the Sudan must be united Constitutionally, how can the people of mixed cultures, religious and ideologies be united under one Constitution?

Dr. Kuni Jwak:

SAC demands Sudan's Constitution be secular to protect its citizens regardless to race or colour religion or ideology. My party had come up with proposal for a Constitution that discourages the divisions of people and calls for equality of citizens before the law. In fact our proposal can unite the Sudanese people without any difficulties.

/9317

CSO: 4500/105

EGYPTIAN TROOPS REPORTED IN HALAIB REGION

Khartoum SUDAN TIMES in English 12 May 87 p 1

[Text]

An informed source disclosed yesterday that Egyptian troops have set up 12 posts in Halaib region on the Red Sea Coast and have issued Egyptian nationality documents and identity cards to the Sudanese residents of the area.

The source added that the Egyptians are operating a manganese mine in Halaib. He feared that these developments might create tension between the two countries.

/9317

CSO: 4500/105

BRIEFS

EDUCATION PROTOCOL WITH USSR--A protocol on grant-in-aid cooperation between the DRA Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education and the USSR State Committee for Vocational and Technical Education was signed and its documents were exchanged this afternoon at the Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education. This protocol stipulates that the Soviet side will provide as grant-in-aid 2 million rubles to equip the existing technical vocational schools and 5 million rubles to equip four new technical vocational schools to the DRA Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education. The Soviet side will also help with the Ministry of Higher and Vocational Education in constructing and equipping a technical construction school in Kabul with a capacity of more than 500 students. The protocol was signed by Burhan Ghiasi, minister of higher and vocational education, and Tamara Vladimirovna Glavak, deputy chairman of the USSR State Committee for Vocational and Technical Education, who is on an official friendly visit of our country. [Text] [Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1530 GMT 10 May 87 LD] /12624

ARMS CACHE SEIZED--As a result of the all-round cooperation of the peace-loving people of Paghman district, Kabul Province, with the district's national reconciliation commission, a large cache of weapons and ammunition belonging to extremist opposition groups was recently discovered and seized in Arghandeh-ye Ulya region, Paghman district, by the country's security forces. According to a Bakhtar report, the security forces, at the request of the national reconciliation commission of Paghman district entered the region while observing the cease-fire and removed the arms cache, which included two DSHKS with two spare barrels, 30 surface-to-surface missiles with 30 warheads, several anti-vehicle mines, hand-grenades, 10 boxes of DSHKS, and various kinds of ammunition, as well as a quantity of antigovernment leaflets. [Text] [Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 1 May 87 LD] /12624

CSO: 4600/222

PRESS REPORTS ON BUILDING TENSIONS ON PRC BORDER

PRC, Indian 'Mobilization'

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 16 Apr 87 pp 1, 9

[Article by Ravi Rikhye]

[Text]

INDIA and China are both engaged in mobilising against each other and for the first time since 1962, there is a real possibility of widespread fighting between the two in summer this year.

The men involved in the army exercise "Brasstacks" are now being deployed in the northern border. Five fighter-squadrons from the west have already shifted to the east and depending on events, further land and air reinforcements are in prospect.

Reports from a variety of sources, indicate that China will attack in summer. This will not be a repeat of 1962, which was a multi-corps offensive all along the front.

Rather the Chinese are expected to administer a series of pinpricks, and perhaps to advance for some distance down three or four valleys into India.

The provocation is a major Chinese mobilisation in Tibet which, according to Western intelligence sources, has been conducted right through the winter. This unprecedented action will place the Chinese army in a position to strike in May.

Unlike the "Brasstacks" which was conducted in the full glare of publicity, the army is keeping very quiet about "Chequerboard", the eastern command exercise. The contrasting styles are indicative of the different approaches to Pakistan and China.

As with most matters concerned with defence, there is a paucity of information on what exactly is happening on the northern borders.

Equally opaque are the Chinese motivations and imperatives. "Chequerboard" itself appears to be a fairly harmless exercise, a mere taking up of full positions in the north against a postulated Chinese attack.

It may well be too early to make definitive statements. The new exercise may also have some ingredient reflecting the personality of the chief of army staff, General K. Sundarji.

Nonetheless, there appears to be no justification for any Chinese apprehension in this regard.

For one thing there is simply to plan for offensive action in the north: the army will merely hang on to what it has, making the most limited of counteroffensives to stabilise the front and prevent our troops from losing too much ground.

For another the army just does not believe it possesses the capability required to mount and sustain a Tibet offensive.

There is the possibility that Beijing looks at the matter differently. Nonetheless, the Chinese mobilisation cannot be explained solely in terms of a fear of an Indian attack.

Other factors must also play a part. The simplest explanation is that the Chinese, as in 1962, plan to teach India a lesson because of the declaration of Arunachal as a full fledged state of the Union, the "Sumdrochong Chu" affair and the exercise Brasstacks.

There is a definite impression garnered both from the Chinese and from other diplomatic sources in Delhi that Beijing feels India is "getting too big for its boots" and that it is throwing its weight around in the region, particularly against Pakistan and Sri Lanka and must once again be discredited.

Arunachal is a relatively straightforward matter. China claims the entire state as disputed territory, and has been pushing for an Indian acceptance of the status-quo in Ladakh in return for giving up its claims.

The removal of Mr A. P. Venkateswaran as former foreign secretary was due at least as much to his opposition to any hasty moves regarding China as anything else. The ministry of external affairs had been advocating their stepping up of Indian efforts to negotiate the border dispute with China.

There is no evidence that the Prime Minister was in any way averse to this. His action on Arunachal was probably a spontaneous and not a carefully considered one. The feeling has been widespread in Indian and foreign diplomatic circles that perhaps there was no need, at this time, to aggravate the Chinese by declaring Arunachal a full-fledged state.

The "Sumdorchung Chu" incident is a baffling as anything else to do with our China relations. Ostensibly, two Chinese platoons intruded into Indian territory and then settled in for the winter. The government did its best to avoid any publicity and was, in fact,

mortified when members of Parliament wanted a discussion.

In October, the Indian army concentrated a brigade to throw out the Chinese. The battalions in the lead brigade were handpicked units. The attack was inexplicably called off several times and eventually cancelled despite there being no likelihood that the Chinese would make even a token resistance: they had in no way fortified their position.

Now it appears that the Chinese may actually be on their own side of the border and that the government of India knows this after an army survey team checked the area.

If this information is correct, why has the government not quietly acknowledged this? Why has the claim of an intrusion been repeated in the annual ministry of defence report for 1986-87?

Disagreement Over Arunachal Pradesh

Madras THE HINDU in English 17 Apr 87 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 16

The war of words between India and China on the issue of the border of Arunachal Pradesh seems to be hotting up with the reported criticism by the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman to the references made on China and the issue of Sumdorong Chu in the annual reports of India's External Affairs Ministry and the Ministry of Defence. The Government of India does not plan to take any special notice of the spokesman's observations. They have taken the position that India's views on the traditional Line of Control in the area are well known and reiterated several times in Parliament and in official statements outside. They say in this context that in the seventh round of official talks held in Beijing in July 1986, the Chinese side was asked to provide its own definition of the Line of Control and the Indian side was still awaiting its response.

The Ministry of Defence Report for 1986-87 had observed that "China's intrusion into Sumdorong Chu Valley, its protests over the grant of statehood to Arunachal Pradesh, a purely internal issue for India, and the hardening of its stance on the border issue, cast strains on the bilateral relationship." The report also observed that as part of the 'four modernisations' China was improving the quality of its armed forces. The Ministry of External Affairs Annual Report for 1986-87 has stressed that intrusions like the one in Sumdorong Chu "added to the tension and vitiated the atmosphere for the achievement of a just and satisfactory solution to the boundary question."

It went on to add that in the seventh round of official level talks, India "also stressed that the Chinese side should do nothing to aggravate matters and disturb the *status quo*." Further, the report adds that the Government of India rejected the adverse Chinese reaction to the conferment of Statehood to Arunachal Pradesh "as a clear interference in India's internal affairs."

The statements and commentaries coming out of Beijing have led to speculation in some Western countries that there may be small-scale skirmishes on the Sino-Indian border this summer when the snows melt. While some of them are in a position to know better than India as to whether China is conducting a buildup on the borders, there is an element of suspicion as to the aim of some diplomats who are privately warning that the border issue may hot up soon.

Meanwhile, Indian officials are stressing that the solution to the border issue can come only through peaceful means. The Indian military commanders share this view though as per their duties they are taking steps to ensure that should any challenge to the country's security be forthcoming the armed forces will be prepared.

K. V. Narain writes from Tokyo:

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman described India's statement as "nothing but sheer nonsense", pointing out that China has basically accomplished the task of reducing its armed forces by one million, whereas India, in contrast, had increased its defence budget for 1987-88 by 43 per cent over the previous year.

The spokesman, asked to comment on the 1986-87 annual report of the Indian External Affairs Ministry accusing China of intruding into Sumdorong Valley of India last year, said 'the allegation about China's violation of Indian territory has totally confounded black and white and the Sumdorong Valley has always been Chinese territory'.

The spokesman claimed as an irrefutable fact that China had never occupied a single inch of Indian territory, whereas, on the contrary, 'large tracts of Chinese territory have been occupied by India up to now'.

Discussion in Lok Sabha

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 21 Apr 87 p 1

[Article by Chidanand Rajghatta]

[Text]

New Delhi, April 20: The government is keeping a close watch on the deployment of Chinese troops across the border between the two countries in the northeast following reports that these may be more serious intrusions in the area with the onset of summer.

An unspecified number of troops, some of which participated in the Operation Brasstacks held in Rajasthan earlier this year have been moved to the northeast to counter the perceived Chinese threat. Although there have been reports that this movement on the Indian side is part of another military exercise code-named Operation Chequerboard, correlated to Brasstacks, sources said the placement of troops also served to organise a defensive posture in vulnerable areas following a heavy Chinese build up in the area over last few weeks.

It is pointed out here that the Chinese intrusion into the Sumdorong Chu Valley in Arunachal Pradesh occurred around the same time last year and precautionary measures are needed to forestall another such provocation. The Chinese have since built a helipad in the area and Indian and Chinese troops are poised within a few hundred metres of each other at several points.

At the diplomatic level China is understood to have sent tough messages to India, especially through the US defence

secretary, Mr Caspar Weinberger, who late last year came to New Delhi after visiting Beijing. However, within the foreign office, India's China policy is on a sound footing now, since the foreign secretary, Mr KPS Menon, was till recently India's envoy in Beijing.

Although the border dispute between India and China has remained unresolved for several years, there have been seven rounds of official level talks, the matter has taken a turn for the worse since December last year when the Indian Parliament approved a Bill upgrading Arunachal Pradesh, (which the Chinese believe to be "disputed territory") from a Union territory to a state. India's action so irked China that a foreign office spokesman described the act as "violation of China's territorial integrity and sovereignty" and termed the Bill "absolutely illegal."

Further, the spokesman warned of "serious consequences" arising from the "attempt by Indian authorities to try to legalise the occupation of Chinese territory through domestic legislation." It is against this background that India is viewing China's latest posture of "time to teach India a lesson."

However, soon after the Chinese statement, India registered its protest on the Chinese stand and said unambiguously that it constituted a clear interference in

the internal affairs of India. But this again provoked a commentary from the official Chinese news agency, Xinhua, rejecting the Indian stand.

But despite trading statements, both sides have reiterated their respective commitment to a peaceful solution to the border dispute, although the Chinese intrusion last year in the Sumdurong Chu Valley appears to belie this.

The Indian government's concern over the Chinese moves was reflected in the Lok Sabha today where the defence minister, Mr K. C. Pant, referred to the troops buildup on the Arunachal Pradesh border while cautioning the Opposition about the threats facing the country.

Alleged Border Crossings

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 23 Apr 87 pp 1, 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 22.—India today denied its troops had been "nibbling" at Chinese territory and reiterated that its policy was to resolve all issues with China through dialogue, report PTI and UNI.

The Government's position was set out by a Foreign Office spokesman in response to China's new accusations that Indian troops had been crossing the border, nibbling at Chinese territory, violating air space and massing troops along the border.

"There have been no Indian military exercises in the proximity of the India-China border in recent months," he said. Answering reporters' queries, the spokesman added: "Indian troops have very strict instructions not to cross the India-China border."

"There is, therefore, no question of Indian troops nibbling at or crossing the India-China border. They have not done so".

In Beijing today, a Chinese Foreign Office spokesman alleged that India "has massed its troops in areas along the Sino-Indian border and conducted a large-scale military exercise code-named Chessboard, thus again resulting in tension".

At the same time, he said, some Indian newspapers even groundlessly stated that China was

building up its forces in Tibet to teach India a lesson. "This is a sheer rumour concocted out of ulterior motives. It is our hope that the Indian side, in the overall interest of Sino-Indian friendship, would refrain from provoking incidents," the spokesman said.

While declining to give details of the alleged Indian build-up, the spokesman told a questioner that China had "made our views known to the Indian side through diplomatic channels". Asked if it could be described as a protest, he said: "We have made representations".

Asked if denial of reports of a Chinese build-up in Tibet meant that China was taking no precaution against whatijing had described as violations of Chinese sovereignty by military forces, the Chinese spokesman said Chinese frontier guards were carrying out normal patrols along the border. "We have no build-up of military strength there and so such assertion or allegation is a groundless rumour".

On the contrary, he said, the Chinese side had made sincere efforts to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border area between China and India.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1652

TRIPATHI REPORTS GANDHI, SINGH RELATIONS IMPROVED

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 23 Apr 87 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 22.—Mr Kamalapati Tripathi, former working president of the Congress (I), told a Press conference here this evening that the President could dismiss the Prime Minister only if he lost his majority support in the Lok Sabha and refused to resign.

Mr Tripathi said the President could still not dissolve the House "without exploring the possibility of forming an alternative Government. In other words, the President cannot carry on the administration on his own. He has to have the advice at all times of a council of Ministers".

In reply to questions, the veteran leader said his meetings with and appeals in letters to the President and the Prime Minister showed their relations "have improved".

Mr Tripathi released copies of two letters to the Prime Minister on March 20 and 25 and Mr Rajiv Gandhi's reply on March 21 and a letter to Mr Zail Singh on March 23 when he was received at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Mr Gandhi said in his letter that the controversy was improper. It would not have cropped up if the President's letter had not been published in newspapers. He had no desire to show any disrespect to the high office of the President.

Mr Tripathi said it would be a bad precedent if the President dismissed the Prime Minister. "What will be the result of this, say after 20 years, when many people like me will not be around"? He did not impute any motives to Mr V. P. Singh's statements to the Press.

Mr Tripathi had stressed in his letter to the Heads of State and Government that their controversy should end immediately as it was harmful to the interests of the nation. They represented the independence and supremacy of the nation.

In his statement to the Press, Mr Tripathi said: "Our country has adopted the parliamentary form of democracy as distinct from the presidential form. Here, we have an elected Prime Minister, who, along with his Council of Min-

isters, is responsible to Parliament. And there is a President, who is the constitutional head and symbol of the nation as a whole".

He said there could be special situations where a Prime Minister may lose some support in his own party but can command majority support in the Lok Sabha as happened in Indira Gandhi's case in 1971 after the split in the party.

"Although the President enjoys unfettered discretion in the selection of the Prime Minister under Article 75 of the Constitution, once he is chosen, he can be removed from office only if he forfeits the confidence of the majority in the House".

Mr Tripathi recalled that in 1979, Mr Sanjiva Reddy as President installed Mr Charan Singh as Prime Minister after Mr Morarji Desai's resignation. But when the Congress (I) withdrew its support to him and he was reduced to a minority in the House, he resigned, advising dissolution of the House. The President acted likewise.

"Nowadays, a specious legal argument is being advanced that the President has the inherent power to dismiss the Ministry even while it enjoys majority support in the House, instal a kind of caretaker Government of his own choice and then, on its advice, dissolve Parliament and call for fresh elections.

"This is a perverse interpretation of the Constitution. If any President acts in this way, it would only lead to a conflagration in the country.

"Elements in the country bent on destabilizing the nation's polity are trotting out this plea nowadays, a suggestion which suits their counterparts outside the country who do not wish well by our stable Government and our dynamic democracy.

"Our President has been a great freedom-fighter and nurtured in the traditions of Gandhiji, Panditji and Indiraji.

"I am sure that our President with his background would never countenance such mischievous suggestions. Our Constitution-makers

have accorded the highest importance to the two institutions of Prime Minister and President. They have regarded these as two wheels of the chariot of Indian democracy.

"I am confident that as a result of the recent meetings between the two leaders, any differences that might have existed between them would have been ironed out.

"Even though the President had some minor differences occasionally with Indiraji herself, these were never allowed to result in any rift between them.

"At present, all lovers of democracy should expect the same smooth relations between the Prime Minister and the President, especially because the President is shortly completing his five-year tenure. Nothing should happen in the few months that are still left between him and the Prime Minister which would cast a slur on our democracy and the hoary traditions of our country".

Our Staff Correspondent in Lucknow adds: U.P. politics warmed up a bit when about 40 Opposition legislators stormed into the secretariat (annexe) and staged a dharna inside the lobby to demand among other things the dismissal of the Rajiv Gandhi Government by the President. Their memorandum was addressed to the President through the Chief Minister of U.P. The legislators were arrested and sent back after a while.

Among those who staged the dharna were Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, leader of Lok Dal (B), Mr R. Singh (Janata), Mr Rama Shankar Kaushik (Congress J) and Mr Sarjoo Pandey (CPI).

The memorandum to the President, copies of which were given to reporters to spoke of corruption in administration. The nation was being ruled by corrupt and anti national forces. Pointing out the alleged pay offs in defence deals, the memorandum demanded dismissal of the Union Government, a probe into defence deals by an all Party parliamentary committee and publication of a white paper on the controversies.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1652

REPORT ON MEETING OF BHARATIYA JANATA EXECUTIVE

Madras THE HINDU in English 20 Apr 87 p 7

[Text]

ROHTAK, April 19.

The National Executive of the Bharatiya Janata Party concluded its three-day meeting here today by resolving to launch a crusade against corruption in public life apart from organising a campaign demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister, who has "lost the moral authority to rule the country."

Briefing newsmen at the end of the discussion on the political situation in the country, the party chief, Mr. L. K. Advani, said the party's perception was that in the wake of the serious and persisting controversies over the kickbacks in defence deals, foreign bank accounts of powerful people and the thaw in the relations between the President and the Prime Minister, the ruling party was seeking to create the same kind of atmosphere in the country that preceded the proclamation of Emergency in 1975 after the Allahabad High Court judgment, setting aside Indira Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha.

Mr. Advani said the pattern of events was just the same as in 1975. The ruling party was attacking the Opposition, the press and others, who were condemning its indefensible acts. It was seeing an attempt to destabilise the government in collusion with foreign forces.

Credibility eroded: Instead of carrying out a probe into the scandals that have surfaced in quick succession in recent times, reducing the credibility of the ruling party (whose two Ministers have resigned) to "sub-zero and subterranean levels," the ruling party was carrying out a slanderous campaign against the President, the press, the Opposition, and the members of the ruling party, who have criticised the Government for its failure to govern effectively and violating the Constitution by placing a distorted interpretation on the provisions. Such a campaign has been launched was clear from the Congress Working Committee resolution.

Mr. Advani said the threat to the stability of the Government was from Mr. Rajiv Gandhi himself and none else. The resolution on the political situation, he said, noted that "with these horrendous revelations (controversies about kickbacks, foreign accounts and the relations between the Prime Minister and the President),

which seem only the tip of the iceberg, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has lost the moral authority to rule the country. Elementary decency demands that he resign forthwith. The one and only service he can now render to the country is to go—and sin no more."

'Quit and make way for new leader': Either Mr. Gandhi should quit and allow the party to elect a new leader in his place or he should seek a fresh mandate from the people to have a moral right to rule the country, Mr. Advani said.

Mr. Advani announced that from May 3 to May 10 the party would carry out a country-wide campaign against corruption in public life and high places. The legislators belonging to the party during the week or before it, submit a charge-sheet to the President listing the cases of corruption involving influential people.

Presidential election: The BJP chief declined to comment whether his party would support Mr. Zail Singh if he decided to seek re-election to the office of President. He said that his party would favour a concerted approach by the Opposition in the matter. "I do not want to pre-empt the Opposition on the issue." Moreover, it was not known whether Mr. Zail Singh would seek another term.

While stating categorically that his party would not merge with any other political party and keep its separate identity, he said his party was desirous of forging an alliance for contesting the Haryana Assembly elections.

Dragging feet on electoral reforms: Later, addressing a public meeting, Mr. Advani said the root cause of administrative corruption lay in political corruption which, in turn, stemmed from electoral corruption. And the ruling party had a vested interest in the loopholes in the electoral laws and that was why the necessary reforms were not being introduced. Since the appointment of the present Chief Election Commissioner, there has not been a single meeting convened by him to discuss electoral reforms with the ruling party and the Opposition.

The BJP chief said that violation of the code of conduct for the candidates in an election should be provided legislative teeth by declaring such violations as corrupt practice.

REPORT ON GANDHI 15 APR SPEECH TO CONGRESS-I

Madras THE HINDU in English 16 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI April 15.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, has called for the strengthening of national unity to combat forces of destabilisation and pressures against the internal and external policies of the country. Speaking to the Congress (I) Parliamentary Party this morning, he said that whenever his party raised the issue of these pressures, they were dismissed as 'bogey' but 'the foreign hand is always present. When we are strong it is invisible, but when we are weak it is seen prominently,' he said.

The Prime Minister pointed to examples of Chile and parts of Latin America, Namibia (South West Africa) and Angola where "manifestations of these forces can be clearly seen." These nations were not being allowed to develop in freedom and whenever India raised its voice in defence of people who were battling injustice and oppression, it displeased some powers. In India's own neighbourhood, he added, despite professions for non-proliferation, Pakistan was being armed heavily and the U.S. was waiving rules and laws "to make it possible." Referring to Libya, he said the conscience of Europe was roused against the actions there resulting in the weakening of "those who

want to pressure independent countries." Earlier, in an oblique reference to the U.S. he said India could not be bought by aid or transfer of technology.

Calling for strengthening of the national economy, the Prime Minister said the public sector was the pivotal element in the planning strategy and the foundation of the economy of the country and the political stability of the nation. Baseless allegations and rumours were being used to weaken the national economy and should this happen "the forces of destabilisation will find the task easier."

Insinuations, innuendo: It was important to remember that efforts had been made through insinuations and innuendo to weaken the morale of the defence forces. This would not be allowed because if the morale of the defence forces was affected, it would be difficult to rebuild it. The country's intelligence arm, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), was virtually dismantled by the Janata Government and his government was now taking great efforts to rebuild the organisation. He appealed to all democratic and patriotic forces to come together in defence of the country's economy and its political independence.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1645

CONGRESS-I ALLEGES CONSPIRACY TO WEAKEN INDIA

Summary of Resolution

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 19 Apr 87 pp 1, 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 18.

IN one of the grimmest ever resolutions adopted in the wake of the recent allegations of kick-backs from Swedish and West German defence deals, the Congress Working Committee today declared its unflinching determination to combat the forces of destabilisation which were out to dismantle the democratic set-up and to tie India to the apron strings of neo-colonialism.

The CWC resolution pin-pointed the Islamabad-Washington axis for masterminding "a grand design of destabilisation." While the document named Pakistan, it made a reference to the U.S. by stating: "It does not need much ingenuity to discover who stands behind Pakistan."

It also stated that the situation in Afghanistan was used to legitimise unprecedented re-arming of Pakistan "in consonance with its appointed role of the bastion of neo-imperialism in our part of the world."

The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, presided over the CWC meeting which was attended by 18 of the 19 members and which adopted the resolution in the morning session. The post-lunch session, attended by 106 leaders including chief ministers, CLP leaders and PCC presidents and special invitees, endorsed the CWC resolution. The solitary CWC member who was absent was Mr Ramanand Yadav who is out of the capital.

The CWC resolution made an indirect reference to the attempts to spoil the relationship between the

President and the Prime Minister and attached the right reaction for engaging in "sordid manoeuvres" to topple the government through trickery and fraud.

Stating that the nation faced grave dangers and that the unity and integrity of India were threatened by communal, fundamentalist, divisive and separatist forces, the resolution said that the democratic parliamentary system was being subjected to severe strain through a calculated campaign of calumny.

"The security of India is being imperilled by uncalled for and unwarranted reflections cast on the defence preparedness of our patriotic defence forces," it said and deprecated the atmosphere of cynicism and despair being fostered to undermine the confidence and determination of the nation.

In short, it said, a grand design of destabilisation was being implemented with meticulous attention to detail.

"The direct threat posed by the supply of most sophisticated weapons systems to Pakistan has been further aggravated by a massive campaign to undermine the morale of our defence forces by inspired and motivated stories regarding defence contracts," the CWC resolution said. It expressed its outrage by the persistent and conscious efforts being made by countries inimical to India's interests to prevent rapid upgradation of technology in the defence forces.

"The consequence of the avalanche of disinformation let loose on an unsuspecting public will be to weaken our defence preparedness vis-a-vis a country which has attacked India no less than four times, emboldened by its acquisition of weaponry from abroad," it stated.

The CWC noted that the events of the last six weeks had established

beyond doubt a pattern of destabilisation in which external forces hostile to India had been revealed to be inextricably linked with the internal forces of political and economic subversion. The rapidity with which the events had developed showed careful preparation and a professional sense of timing on the part of those who had cast all scruples aside to undo the will of the people.

The attack on the political system had proceeded in parallel with the attack on the defence system. "All manner of phoney issues are being generated, including flagrant misinterpretation of clear constitutional provisions, to throw the delicate equilibrium of our polity into turmoil."

The parties of the "right reaction" had openly laid their cards on the table. After having been trounced in the general elections, they were engaged in sordid manoeuvres to topple the government which had a massive popular mandate behind it, through trickery and fraud, and through open incitement of lawlessness and subversion. The right reaction was giving powerful support to communal and fundamentalist forces with the definite objective of creating violence, disorder and confusion, the resolution stated.

"Disharmony, tension, conflict and hatred are being artificially engineered to divide the people and to deflect their attention from the tasks of development and national reconstruction. Religion is being exploited to serve sinister political aims," it said.

The CWC declared that any amount of vicious propaganda masterminded by external and internal forces of disruption, reactionary elements and multinationals would not be allowed to make inroads into India's socio-economic and political system.

Declaring that what was at stake was the very future of democracy, the Congress called upon all secular, democratic and progressive forces to sink their differences and to serve the larger national objective.

Briefing newsmen late this evening, Mr Nawal Kishore Sharma, AICC general secretary, said the CWC had decided to hold a one-day Congress convention at the district level to be followed by a two-day convention at the state level within six weeks. The district-level convention would be addressed by state leaders and the other by national leaders, he said.

When a newsman interjected to say that this was being done before the Haryana assembly elections, Mr Sharma retorted: "If it comes earlier, then?"

Asked when a session of the AICC would be held, Mr Sharma said the matter had been discussed but no decision was taken. He also added that the CWC could not take up for discussion the party's poll performance in

Kerala, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir because the entire time was taken up in discussing the political resolution.

Replying to a question on whether any of the speakers in today's CWC meeting had referred to the recent defence deals, Mr Sharma said there was no direct reference. In reply to another question, he said that Mr V. P. Singh was not present at the CWC meeting as he was not a member of this forum. Neither was Mr Arun Nehru present. He released a list of all those who attended the meeting and also the political resolution running into eight pages.

The holding of the conventions is a sequel to the CWC resolution which enjoins on the party to carry out a massive campaign to rouse public consciousness against the open and hidden enemies of unity and progress. "The forces of reaction and subversion have to be mercilessly exposed and all their high-sounding slogans shown to be what they are in reality — mere instruments of deception and naked aggrandisement," it said.

It also pointed out that if the designs of destabilisation were to succeed, "India would be fragmented and her sons and daughters will again be reduced to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water for foreign masters."

Stating that the prime target of their sinister orchestration of disruptive forces are the Congress and its leader, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, it said that "a vicious campaign of falsehood, insinuation and innuendo, backed by baseless and malicious charges, has been mounted to tarnish the image of the party and its leadership and intensified in recent weeks."

The reason was that the Congress, more than any other party, symbolised the unity and integrity of India and any weakening of the Congress would inevitably lead to the country's balkanisation, prevent it from becoming a great industrial power and reduce all anti-imperialist forces to a state of pathetic ineffectiveness in the developing world. Therefore, it was not a coincidence that "an attack of unprecedented ferocity has been mounted upon the Congress and its resurgent and courageous leadership represented by Mr Rajiv Gandhi."

Referring to the unabashed display of communalism and separatism, the CWC resolution stated that full support, political and material, was given to the secessionist forces in Punjab from across our border.

"Despite vehement protestations of friendship, Pakistan has continued to indulge in its nefarious game of sowing dissection and disharmony in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. Its covert and overt support to subversive forces in these states is a matter of historical

record. It does not need much ingenuity to discover who stands behind Pakistan," the resolution pointed out.

All principled commitments to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons had been forgotten and disdainfully discarded to ensure that, notwithstanding its barely concealed objective of becoming a nuclear weapon state, it continued to perform its role in the geo-political strategy of confrontation between the two blocs. India was prepared to bear the heavy burdens of these developments had imposed upon its people because "we prize our cherished independence above everything else."

Excerpts of Resolution

Madras THE HINDU in English 19 Apr 87 p 2

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 18.

The following are excerpts from the Congress (I) Working Committee resolution adopted on Saturday.

When Mr. Rajiv Gandhi assumed the leadership of the nation, a propaganda offensive was launched that the Jawaharlal Nehru-Indira Gandhi framework of independent foreign policy will be subordinated to the geo-political necessities and requirements of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism. A false theory was put forth that modernisation meant submission to the current economic and social doctrines in powerful industrialised countries of the West. The vast Indian market, with its tremendous potential for growth, was seen as a playground for multinationals.

Rude shock and disappointment awaited those who had nursed these illusions in the company of their domestic servitors. The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, did not do any of the things he was supposed to do in the script drawn up in the chancelleries of power of the countries that seek to impose their "dictat" on the developing world. Instead, he became the conscience of humankind in its struggle for peace, for survival against the nuclear winter. He gave a new focus to the non-aligned movement. He became the champion of the black people fighting against the immorality and the tyranny of apartheid. He became the spokesman for equality and justice in international economic relations.

At home, the planning system was strengthened, the war on poverty intensified, the public sector revitalised and the momentum for self-reliant industrial and agricultural growth kept up in the face of heavy odds. A coherent policy of human resource development and educational reform was put forth. The inter-connections between the independent foreign policy of non-alignment and the domestic imperatives of growth with social justice were faithfully respected.

The politics of reconciliation and harmony, exemplified in Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and Mizoram had strengthened the forces of unity and integrity. In all these areas the democratic processes were upheld. A new wave of hope and enthusiasm embracing all sections of society had swept across the land.

All this was anathema to the forces that had longed to incorporate India into their system of domination and exploitation. In their view, the mood of enthusiasm under the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi had to be broken. The resurgence of the spirit had to be emasculated. This is what the forces of reaction set out to do when they realised that India under Mr. Gandhi was not the India they had fondly visualised.

Grave dangers: The nation faces grave dangers. The unity and integrity of India are threatened by communal, fundamentalist, divisive and separatist forces. Our democratic parliamentary system is being subjected to severe strain through a calculated campaign of calumny. The national economy is sought to be destabilised by a deliberate attempt to divert attention from the real issues of investment, growth and social justice to purely peripheral issues. Not content with this, the security of India is being imperilled by uncalled for and unwarranted reflections cast on the defence preparedness of our patriotic defence forces. An atmosphere of cynicism and despair is being fostered, undermining the confidence and determination of the nation. In short, a grand design of destabilisation is being implemented with meticulous attention to detail.

The prime target of their sinister orchestration of disruptive forces are the Congress (I) and its leader, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. A vicious campaign of falsehood, insinuation and innuendo, backed by baseless and malicious charges, has been mounted to tarnish the image of the party and its leadership and intensified in recent weeks. The reason for this is simple. The Congress, more than any other political party, symbolises the unity and integrity of India and the aspirations of the people for social and economic transformation. Any weakening of the Congress would inevitably lead to the country's balkanisation, prevent it from becoming a great industrial power and reduce all anti-imperialist forces to a state of pathetic ineffectiveness in the developing world. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that an attack of unprecedented ferocity has been mounted upon the Congress (I) and its resurgent and courageous leadership represented by Mr. Gandhi.

Pakistan's nefarious game: Thus began the unabashed display of the ugly power of communalism and separatism. Full support, political and material, was given to the secessionist forces in Punjab from across our borders. Despite vehement protestations of friendship, Pakistan has continued to indulge in its nefarious game of sowing dissension and disharmony in Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir. Its covert and overt support to subversive forces in these States is a matter of historical record. It does not need much ingenuity to discover who stands behind Pakistan.

As if this unconcealed design to fragment India through assistance of secessionist forces was not enough, the situation in Afghanistan was used to legitimise unprecedented re-arming of Pakistan in consonance with its appointed role of the bastion of neo-imperialism in our part of the world. All principled commitments to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons have been forgotten and disdainfully discarded to ensure that, notwithstanding its barely concealed objective of becoming a nuclear weapon State, it continues to perform its role in the geo-political strategy of confrontation between the two blocs. We are prepared to bear the heavy burdens these developments have imposed upon our people because we prize our cherished independence above everything else.

Motivated stories: The direct threat posed by the supply of most sophisticated weapons systems to Pakistan has been further aggravated by a massive campaign to undermine the morale of our defence forces by inspired and motivated stories regarding defence contracts. The Congress (I) and its Government yield to none in their determination to uphold the values of clean public life. We are, however, outraged by the persistent and conscious efforts being made by countries inimical to our national interests to prevent rapid upgradation of technology in our defence forces. The consequence of the avalanche of disinformation let loose on an unsuspecting public will be to weaken

our defence preparedness vis-a-vis a country which has attacked India no less than four times, emboldened by its acquisition of weaponry from abroad.

The Working Committee notes that the attack on the political system has proceeded in parallel with the attack on the defence system. All manner of "phoney" issues are being generated, including flagrant misinterpretation of clear Constitutional provisions, to throw the delicate equilibrium of our polity into turmoil. The parties of the Right reaction have openly laid their cards on the table. After having been trounced in the general elections, they are engaged in sordid manoeuvres to topple the Government which has a massive popular mandate behind it, through trickery and fraud, and through open incitement of lawlessness and subversion.

Destabilisation pattern: The events of the last six weeks establish beyond doubt a pattern of destabilisation in which the external forces hostile to India have been revealed to be inextricably linked with the internal forces of political and economic subversion. The rapidity with which the events have developed shows careful preparation and a professional sense of timing on the part of those who have cast all scruples aside to undo the will of the people.

The Working Committee declares its unflinching determination to combat these forces of destabilisation. We are confident that no power will prevail against the unqualified mandate of the people to the Congress and its leader, Mr. Gandhi. The broad masses—farmers, industrial workers, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, the backward classes, minorities, women and youth—will not allow any machinations against the party and its Government to succeed. They will come out in their millions as a solid phalanx against intrigue and subversion of disgruntled vested interests and their foreign accomplices.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1647

CORRESPONDENT ON STRUGGLE AGAINST ORISSA TEST RANGE

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 19 Apr 87 p 9

[Text] Baliapal (Orissa), April 18.—The Orissa Chief Minister, Mr J.B. Patnaik, was to come here today for a meeting with the local people in connexion with the agitation they have been continuing in protest against the proposed National Test Range site. He has cancelled the visit and left for New Delhi.

In an interview Mr Patnaik said that he would have to be in Delhi for the meeting of the Congress(I) Working Committee.

The news will certainly boost the morale of the people here who have been fighting for the past three years to get the plan for the National Test Range scrapped. The people had earlier forced the cancellation of another meeting of Mr Patnaik last October. Despite elaborate police arrangements, several thousand men collected at the block headquarters here and dismantled the dais erected for the Chief Minister's meeting.

The people had been equally hostile to Government officials here. For the past three years, they did not allow either Government officials or vehicles to enter the area demarcated for the proposed NTR. A former Collector of Balasore, Mr I.C. Das was gheraoed [as published] overnight when he moved into the area and was "released" only after he assured the people that he would do nothing to force the setting up of the project. The Block Development Officer here was "caught" in the Bay of Bengal by fishermen acting as the coast guard of the resistance movement. Ultimately, last December, the State Government airdropped leaflets from a helicopter, appealing to the people to withdraw the movement.

The NTR area is spread over 400 sq. km, which includes about 25,000 acres of agricultural land. One of the most prosperous crop areas in the whole of Orissa, it also has about 30,000 betel vines and cashew and coconut trees worth several hundred crores of rupees. Besides, about 50,000 fishermen eke out a living along the seashore.

Mr Priyabrata Patnaik, the Collector of Balasore, said that of the 25,000 acres, 11,000 acres belonged to the Government and had been forcibly occupied by the people. But even these encroachers would be given compensation for the

plots now held by them. They would also get the benefit of the Rs 127-crore rehabilitation package. The State Government has already started work on setting up a "model" village to rehabilitate the first batch of 1,500 people at Deura and an industrial estate here. The Opposition Janata Party leaders, however, are resisting the move to set up the model village as they argue, the project is sought to be implemented by evicting some tribals settled in that village. The NTR project, itself, will employ only 419 people. "This is not a labour-intensive project", said the Collector.

The people, of course, are not interested either in a model village or in the "one-job-in-one-family" package offered under the rehabilitation plan. Their leaders argue that no amount of rehabilitation expenses could ensure them the economic prosperity they enjoy at present. "In each family here, even the five-year-olds and the 60-year-olds make a decent earning", said the movement leaders. "We engage the children at the betel vines and the old women for dehusking cashew and groundnuts".

They complained that the Government, unable to cow down the people, had resorted to "an economic blockade" of the area. Ration supplies to NTR areas had allegedly been stopped last November. Mr Patnaik, the Balasore Collector, explained that the supplies could not be sent to the interior parts as the movements volunteers did not allow Government vehicles to enter the villages. The Government had to stop supplies because, he said, it was in no position to monitor the supplies. But efforts are on to break the stalemate.

Mr Samarendra Kundu, Janata leader, who has been one of the main inspirations behind the resistance movement, however, has a "more basic objection". According to him, the area is not suitable for an NTR project, not only because it will displace about 100,000 people, but also because it will endanger the safety of life and property for a greater number of people outside the project area.

According to Mr Kundu, during a meeting convened by Mr Arun Singh, Minister of State for Defence, in April, 1986, Mr Arunachalam, Scientific Advisor to the Union Government, suggested six other places where such a project would involve negligible displacement of people or loss of property. These were Dwaraka in Gujarat, Sriharikota (where missile-launching facilities already exist), the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sagardeep area and Satabhaiya in Cuttack district of Orissa and the Rajasthan deserts. According to Mr Kundu, even the Prime Minister, in a letter to him last September, admitted that the NTR project had been shifted to Baliapal from Bindur in Karnataka in the face of another public resistance.

Finally, the failure of the ASLV launching from Sriharikota last month has given rise to the fear that the six-kilometre zone at Baliapal, declared "danger-free", would prove "thoroughly inadequate" in the event of such failures. Mr Kundu, who was Union Minister of State for External Affairs, during the Janata regime, argued that the "thrust" of launching polar missiles and satellites would be felt up to a distance of 100 km, which would affect about one million people, directly or indirectly.

To ensure complete safety, the Government has to demarcate at least 50 km as the danger-free zone. But this will involve the "impossible task" of evicting a million people. The only sensible course open to the Government in the circumstances, he argued, was to shift the project to some other area where the displacement of people would be of a manageable proportion.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1646

STAY OF EXECUTION FOR GANDHI KILLERS GRANTED

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 15 Apr 87 pp 1, 3

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 14.

THE supreme court today stayed the execution of the three accused, Satwant Singh, Balbir Singh and Kehar Singh, in the Indira Gandhi assassination case.

While admitting their appeals against the confirmation of the death sentence by the Delhi high court, the court ordered expeditious hearing of the appeals which were filed in February.

The accused were also given the liberty to mention before the chief justice an early date for the hearing. Mr P. Parameswaran, counsel for the Delhi administration, against which the appeals have been filed, was present in the court and waived the notice.

Mr Ram Jethmalani, while arguing for the accused, contended before Mr Justice V. Khaliq and Mr Justice G. L. Oza, that "it is an unanswerable case. The entire trial was void as it was not a public trial as warranted under article 21 of the constitution."

Arguing for Balbir Singh, former sub-inspector who was posted in the security line, the counsel contended that his conviction was based on "no evidence."

Balbir Singh along with Kehar Singh, a former assistant in the directorate general for supplies and disposal, have been sentenced to death for hatching a conspiracy to assassinate Mrs Gandhi. Beant Singh, slain sub-inspector, and Satwant Singh, a constable, executed the conspiracy to "avenge" Operation Bluestar, as the prosecution put it.

The then additional sessions judge, Mr Mahesh Chandra, after an eight-and-a-half-month trial inside the Tihar jail, awarded the death sentence on January 22 last year. A full bench of the high court comprising Mr Justice S. Ranganathan, Mr Justice B. M. Kripal and Mr Justice M. K. Chawla, confirmed the sentence on December 3/ It held that it was the "rarest of the rare case."

Mr Jethmalani, who is mainly defending Kehar Singh and Balbir Singh, also argued for Satwant Singh, whose appeal has also been filed by Mr R. S. Sodhi, standing counsel for the Punjab government in the supreme court. He did not have a senior counsel to represent him.

Balbir Singh's conviction rests on a document which was found on his person when arrested on December 3, 1984, from Najafgarh, the counsel contended. Even the high court had observed that there was no other evidence than the document to convict him, he added.

The documents written in Balbir Singh's handwriting, purported to have stated "felt like killing... Operation Bluestar" etc. He was convicted on the evidence of the policemen, the counsel contended.

Why was the public not made a witness when he was arrested while alighting from a DTC bus? To this the prosecution had contended that "he would have been lynched if his identity was known to the public."

Coming to the document, which Balbir Singh was carrying more than a month after the assassination, the counsel contended that the high court gave four plausible explanations for his action. First, he might be getting some sense of fulfilment, second, boasting, Third, to show it to somebody, lastly, he might be under the impression that he would not be arrested.

There was no Concurrent finding in the issue as the sessions judge did not give any explanation, contended the counsel.

The charge of conspiracy was never established as a confessional statement is a corroboratory evidence and not a conclusive evidence to prove guilt, the counsel pleaded adding that guilt has to be proved independently.

Mr Jethmalani also drew the court's attention to the high court observation that the law of criminal conspiracy in

India was contrary to what was practised in England. This was wrong, he contended since the law on criminal conspiracy in both the countries was the same and it was for the supreme court to give its ruling on the issue.

Referring to Kehar Singh, the counsel contended that his case was on a "better footing." He was arrested a month after the assassination and the police claimed to have recovered another document "Indira de Sikh" from his office drawer. He was also found guilty of motivating Beant Singh, who first opened fire on Mrs Gandhi, to administer "amrit" in a gurdwara.

According to the counsel, every Sikh police officer posted in the Prime Minister's residence felt bitter after Operation Bluestar. The counsel discarded the evidence of the star witness, Amarjeet Singh, a sub-inspector, that Balbir Singh had confided in him that he was provided with a powerful weapon and if his children were looked after by somebody, he would like to kill Mrs Gandhi.

Amarjeet Singh did not disclose this to any senior officer thinking it was a joke, the trial court had been told earlier. "This was not a conspiracy," the counsel pleaded.

He pleaded that in the "national interest," Satwant Singh's case should not be distinguished from the other accused persons. Besides, Satwant Singh has raised a constitutional issue for the court's decision that without his consent a trial was held in the Tihar jail in violation of article 21 of the constitution.

Referring to a privy council decision, Mr Jethmalani submitted that it has set aside a judgment because it was delivered in his retiring room.

In their appeals, the accused have sought acquittal and bail on the grounds that it was not "the rarest of the rare case" and that the trial was void.

/13046

CSO: 4600/1636

TEHRAN SUMS UP IRAQI KURDISH OPERATIONS

LD041242 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 4 May 87

[Text] According to the High Command of the triple forces of the Guards Corps, following the savage attacks by the Iraqi Ba'thist-Zionist regime on villages in Iraqi Kurdistan--which resulted in the martyrdom and injury of a large number of the innocent people of the region--Ramadan headquarters combatants and the forces of the Patriotic Union of Iraqi Kurdistan [PUK], over the past few days attacked the Tancho garrison and the logistic and guidance center for the northern fronts of Iraq, destroying 5 helicopters of the Zionist enemy at the base and killing more than 100 officers and commanders of the garrison. It should be pointed out that the garrison had a big runway, which could accommodate 35 helicopters in an emergency.

According to this report, during the past few days the forces of the Democratic Party of Iraqi Kurdistan and Ramadan headquarters combatants, in a series of harassment operations, killed one of the commanders of the Ba'thist-Zionist mercenaries of Iraq in the Kanimasi region, by the name of Yoreshki. They ambushed an enemy vehicle on the Kakhu-Badantufah road, destroying it and killing its passengers, among whom, First Lieutenant 'Ali Sadiq, one of the mercenaries of the Zionist enemy in the region, could be seen.

Also, another group of the combative Kurdish forces, during a heavy clash near the town of Kakhu, killed or injured a number of Ba'thist-Zionist mercenaries and captured a number of them and a tank and dozens of semi-heavy weapons. They all returned safely to their units.

Quoting Ramadan headquarters, the report also says: Iraqi Kurdish Hezbollahi peshmergas, with the cooperation of forces under the command of that headquarters, during the past few days brought the Shirvanlizi region in Iraq under the fire of semi-heavy weapons, inflicting losses and casualties on the Zionist enemy. They attacked an assembly point of the mercenaries of the Zionist regime in the region, killing four of them and injuring a number of others.

According to this report, following the inhuman acts of the Ba'thist-Zionist regime of Saddam in evacuating villages in northern Iraq and transferring their inhabitants to forced camps, which are accompanied by extensive air

raids and chemical bombings by the forces of the Iraqi regime, during the past week some villagers clashed with the regime's mercenaries intending to evacuate their villages. The inhabitants of these villages, especially in the north of Sulaymaniyah and Erbil and Darban-e Khan, joined the Muslim revolutionaries of Iraq and requested to be armed to fight against this unpopular action by the Iraqi regime.

According to this report, a large number of Muslim and combative students from Salahiddin University in Erbil, who intended to stage demonstrations against Saddam's regime, were attacked and arrested by Iraqi security forces. Some of them fled to liberated areas in northern Iraq and joined the Muslim revolutionaries and Kurdish combatants.

Meanwhile, following its heavy defeat in Karbala'-10 operation, the Iraqi regime has started executing officers and NCO's in relevant units. More than 25 officers and NCO's from destroyed Iraqi units in the Karbala'-10 operational theater, who had fled to behind the lines, have been executed so far.

/9738

CSO: 4600/226

COMMENTARY CRITICIZES POLICY OF 'INDIFFERENCE'

NC261509 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0445 GMT 26 Apr 87

[Commentary from the "Developments on the Front" feature]

[Excerpts] UN General Assembly Resolution 2162, dated 16 December 1966, clearly states that the use of chemicals, whether in a gaseous, liquid, or solid form, which are harmful to human and animal life and vegetation is banned in war. UN General Assembly Resolution 2603 stipulates that the use of all chemical and biological weapons in war is contrary to the norms of international law. On 7 December 1970, the UN General Assembly issued Resolution 2662 which once again states that the use of chemical weapons in any form or quantity is to be banned. Another such resolution, dated 29 November 1972, reiterates this ban on the use of chemical weapons.

These are only a few examples of explicit UN resolutions banning the use of biological weapons. At first glance, these very clear resolutions suggest that international organizations, led by the United Nations, are preventing governments from resorting to the use of such weapons and that they will continue to apply pressure against any government that intends to use them. But has this important task, which is one of the vital duties of these international organizations in safeguarding human values, been taken seriously? Have these organizations in fact been able--or more precisely, wanted--to adopt a suitable and principled stand vis-a-vis the inhuman governments that violate these laws?

Such are the questions now being asked by the world in view of the chemical crimes perpetrated by the Iraqi Ba'thists on the fronts of their war against the Islamic Republic of Iran. The world rightly asks: Why doesn't the United Nations carry out its primary duty with regard to these crimes. More importantly, why do international organizations tacitly support the Iraqi Ba'thists' blatant violations of the law? The United Nations and other so-called responsible international circles cannot claim to be unaware that such crimes are being committed. In view of the fact that ordinary people know about the horrible dimensions of Iraq's chemical crimes, officials from these organizations cannot feign ignorance that such crimes are taking place.

Contrary to its own desire, the UN Security Council has been compelled by public opinion to issue statements about the Iran-Iraq war in the past. One such statement, read by the UN Security Council president, overtly condemned the Ba'thist regime for using poisonous gases. It now seems suitable time to ask: Have the enemies been able to solve any problems for the Baghdad rulers? Apart from being disgracefully recognized as war criminals, have the Ba'thist leaders been able to change the course of the victorious battle being fought by the defenders of Islam?

In one of its issues, the British magazine THE MIDDLE EAST has written the following: Now that the Ba'thist regime has upset the dream that there is some sort of international control on chemical weapons, the possibility that there will be an expanded use of this weapon in other parts of the world seems definite. The Ba'thist regime has used chemical weapons several times, but has not been punished in any war. In conclusion, the magazine refers to the 1925 protocol banning the use of chemical weapons, noting that this protocol has never been so overtly violated as it is today.

We should also discuss what impact the enemy's diological crimes have had on the Iranian nation's intentions and determination. Have these crimes terrorized the Iranian nation? Have these maniacal acts by the Baghdad rulers thrown the Iranian people off the course of their just struggles? Obviously the answer to both questions is no. What can be said in a nutshell is that this reckless regime is continuously increasing its crimes, confident that the various international organizations will remain indifferent. Witnessing this fact, the Iranian nation now realizes more clearly than ever before that it must depend on its own strength alone if it is to put an end to the enemy's aggression and crime.

Those who are in charge of international organizations have adopted silence as their policy. The world has been plunged into an atmosphere of indifference created by the propaganda machinery of the arrogant. Governments of the world either pour oil on the fire or they have adopted a policy of silence and indifference. If the criminals, who have sharpened their filthy claws and now want to attack the revolution, are to be crushed, the heroic Iranian nation must--like before--confront the enemy with machineguns and rely on their faith. By pounding the last breath out of these dying criminals, the Iranian nation will bring those responsible for such horrendous crimes to trial.

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COMMERCE OFFICIAL OUTLINES EXPORT, IMPORT FIGURES

LD301032 Tehran IRNA in English 0810 GMT 30 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, 29 Apr (IRNA)--A total of 646,000 tons of non-oil goods worth \$900 million were exported in Iranian year 1365 (March '86 - March '87), up by 64 percent in terms of value and 23 percent in terms of weight as compared to 0364's figures, said Deputy Commerce Minister Mojtaba Khosrow-Taj here Wednesday.

The deputy commerce minister said that \$5.6 billion worth of non-military commodities were imported in 1365, showing a decrease of 33 percent in comparison to those in 1362.

Last year (1365), Khosrow-Taj said, Iran imported \$1.3 billion worth of basic goods and another \$3.7 billion in other goods despite the Iraqi-imposed war and enemy attempts to make the Persian Gulf insecure.

He said that West Germany and Turkey were Iran's largest trade [words indistinct] percent of Iranian imports worth \$1 billion were from West Germany and 10.58 percent from Turkey, he added.

Some 66.92 percent of Iran's trade exchanges in 1365 was with Western countries, 9.99 percent with East European countries, 8.66 percent with Third World non-Islamic countries and 14.41 percent with Islamic countries, Khosrow-Taj said.

The deputy commerce minister said that Iran's largest non-oil purchasers last year were respectively West Germany with \$170 m, Italy with \$47 m, Dubayy with \$38 m, Switzerland with \$34.7 m, the Netherlands with \$22.7 m, the Soviet Union with \$18.3 m, and Britain with \$14.5 m.

Chemicals and plastics worth \$230 m ranked the highest in the country's foreign purchase orders, followed next by machinery and spare parts for \$93 m and tools and instruments for \$66 m, he said.

Khosrow-Taj said that of the total \$900 m in non-oil exports last year, 42.47 percent comprised agricultural products, 41.46 percent carpets, 2.25 percent manufactured commodities, 2.97 percent in minerals and 10.67 percent in other goods.

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CSO: 4600/226

RAFSANJANI ADDRESSES WORKERS ON LABOR DAY

LD301419 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 30 Apr 87

[Text] During today's open Majlis session, Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani gave a speech on the occasion of international labor day. He referred to the important role of the workers in the country's economy and paid tribute to this toiling stratum. While referring to the mission of the Islamic revolution to create Islamic justice and to return the lost rights of the oppressed, the Majlis speaker said: The workers and the rest of the deprived are given the highest priority in seeking this justice, God willing [sentence as heard]. We are grateful to the workers, who in the course of the war and in the face of the difficulties after the revolution, have always remained sincere supporters of the revolution, and are maintaining their Islamic and revolutionary presence in the battlefields and in other arenas.

On the occasion of martyrdom anniversary of the great martyr, Professor Motahhari, Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani said: Next week is teacher's week. The teachers are among the important strata of our society. The foundations of our culture and training and the education of our children depend on the lofty good will of these hardworking teachers.

The Majlis speaker went on: We expect that the people will demonstrate their gratitude to this big force, which is serving the revolution and our young generation, by actively attending the ceremonies.

On the basis of our correspondent's report, during today's open Majlis session, the second round of the debate on the legal bill related to the economic cooperative sector of the Islamic Republic of Iran continued; and 26 more articles of this bill were ratified.

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CSO: 4600/226

ARMENIANS RALLY TO COMMEMORATE 1915 MASSACRE

LD242320 Tehran IRNA in English 1720 GMT 24 Apr 87

[Text] Tehran, 24 Apr (IRNA)--Thousands of Armenian Iranians staged a rally in Tehran and Esfahan Friday commemorating the 72nd anniversary of the killing of nearly one and a half million Armenians in Turkey over a period culminating on April 24, 1915.

On April 24, 1915, the then Turkish regime massacred multitudes of Armenians, forcing others to emigrate to other parts of the world.

In Tehran, the Armenian marchers chanted slogans denouncing the Turkish Government as well as U.S. for its support for it.

The demonstrators also condemned the Ankara Government for its collaboration with the Iraqi regime in suppressing Iraqi Kurdish militants.

Police surrounded the Turkish Embassy here to prevent their entry to the embassy compounds. The demonstrators ended their rally in front of a church near the embassy, without attempting to break into the embassy.

In a resolution issued at the end of the rally, the Armenians voiced their full support for the Muslim combatants of Iran in the war with the Iraqi forces. [Tehran IRNA in English at 1715 GMT on 24 April in a similar report, words and last graf as follows: "In a resolution issued at the end of the rally, the Armenians deplored the exit from Iran of a few Armenians who had fanned the fire of Western hostile propaganda against Iran. They also voiced their full support for Muslim combatants of Iran in the war with the Iraqi forces."]

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CSO: 4600/226

MUSLIMS IN KUWAITI JAIL 'BRUTALLY TORTURED'

LD041855 Tehran IRNA in English 1835 GMT 4 May 87

[Text] Tehran, 4 May (IRNA)---Fifteen Muslim prisoners went on an indefinite hunger strike in Kuwait early this week in protest to suppressive measures of Kuwaiti security agents and jailers in the Sheikhdome's prisons.

According to reports reaching here the Muslims, arrested on alleged charges of planting bombs in Kuwait's oil installations, are awaiting a security court verdict in dirty and unhealthy prisons. Kuwaiti jailers insult Islamic sanctities and prevent the prisoners from holding congregational prayers and reciting the Holy Quran, the reports say.

Meanwhile, two Muslim prisoners, Abdol-Vahhab Seyyed Hassan and Hassan Hajiyeh [spellings as received], passed out after being brutally tortured by Kuwaiti security agents. The latter is reported to be in serious condition. Muslim prisoners were also reportedly brutally attacked by Kuwaiti jailers to days ago.

In another development, Javad al-Attar [spelling as received], prayers leader of Kuwait's Sha'ban Mosque, was transferred to the military hospital of Kuwait last week after being tortured by security agents. He was arrested two months ago on as yet unspecified charges.

Kuwaiti security court is to announce its verdict for the 15 prisoners on 16 June. The concluded trial was held behind closed doors among tight security measures with bi-weekly sessions.

The accused are said to have pleaded innocent to all the charges. They also revealed that they had been tortured and subjected to all manner of abuse in the sheikhdome's horrible prisons.

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